

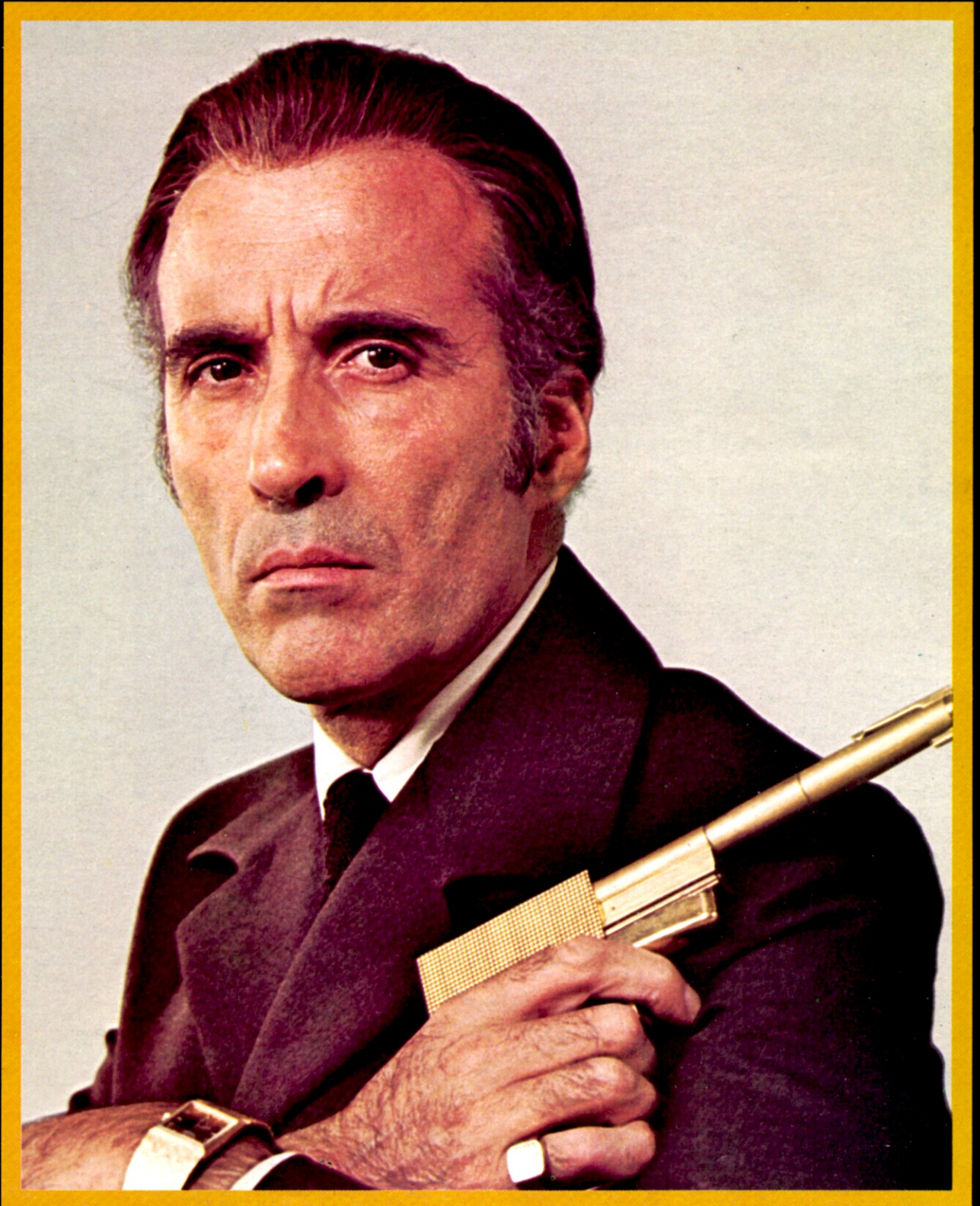
CINEFANTASTIQUE™

Volume 4 Number 1

\$2.50

**Christopher
Lee**

**THE
MAN
WITH
THE
GOLDEN
GUN**



CINEFANTASTIQUE



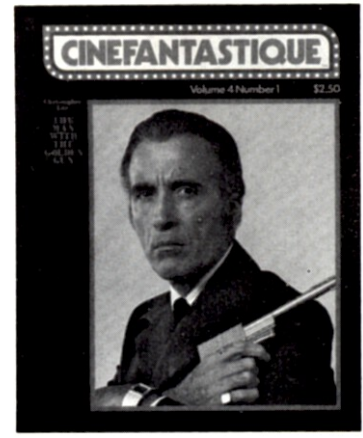
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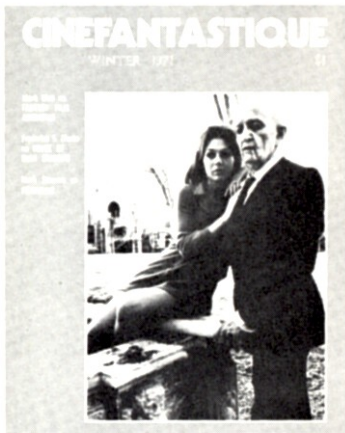
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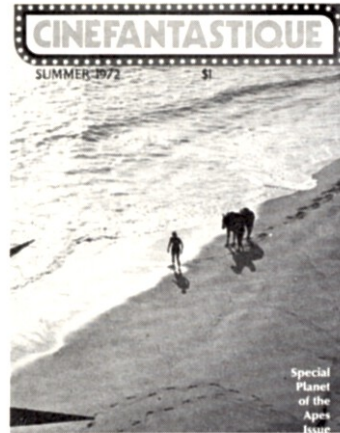
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Volume 1 Number 2



Volume 2 Number 2



Volume 3 Number 2

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And those are just the "special" features...



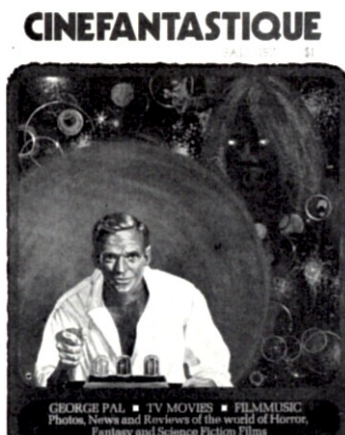
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SPRING

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RETROSPECT

FORBIDDEN PLANET

by Steve Rubin

THE PRODUCTION HISTORY OF THE FIRST FILM TO CAPTURE THE ESSENCE OF THE SCIENCE FICTION GENRE AS TOLD BY THE PEOPLE WHO CREATED IT. FORBIDDEN PLANET IS RARELY MATCHED, EVEN TODAY, IN ITS SCOPE, BEAUTY AND BOUNDLESS IMAGINATION.

FORBIDDEN PLANET, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's first attempt at science fiction released in 1956, is an updated version of William Shakespeare's last play, "The Tempest." It is remarkable, even today, for its lavish production values which reflected the deep-seated feeling of the studio's executives that MGM would not follow her competitors and produce a low-budget outer space picture. The studio had earned the reputation of being the best in Hollywood and often boasted of having "more stars than in heaven," and this attitude of going "only first class" resulted in an expenditure of \$1,900,000 to create the world of FORBIDDEN PLANET as realistically as possible on the MGM sound stages at Culver City. Historically speaking, this was probably the first time in Hollywood that a science fiction film received the budget it deserved, and significantly, it was MGM who twelve years later would give \$9,000,000 more to Stanley Kubrick to create the ultimate in science fiction films, his 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY.

But today, little more than the name remains of the old MGM capable of producing a FORBIDDEN PLANET. The company is now more interested in running its Grand Hotel in Las Vegas, a pet project of the innkeeper who gained control of the company, than it is in producing a handful of films each year, films made on rented facilities and released by United Artists, MGM's distribution partner who controls their film library for theatrical release, including FORBIDDEN PLANET. A source at MGM, when contacted about the film, politely informed us that "the stuff on the old films has all been sent back east." Perhaps realizing this sounded like a put-off, he added with a note of sincerity: "It's in a warehouse somewhere, in New Jersey, I think, but I'm not sure." He didn't really care. The film has been released to television, its potential as a theatrical attraction written-off long ago. In 1972, MGM supposedly re-released the film to theatres as part of a G-rated Children's Matinee Package, but the company's by then withering distribution arm failed to book many playdates* And so FORBIDDEN PLANET unspools on late-night TV, where it is chopped up to accommodate automobile

*A faint possibility exists to view FORBIDDEN PLANET theatrically as it was intended in the avowed interest of United Artists to resume matinee bookings of the film this summer.

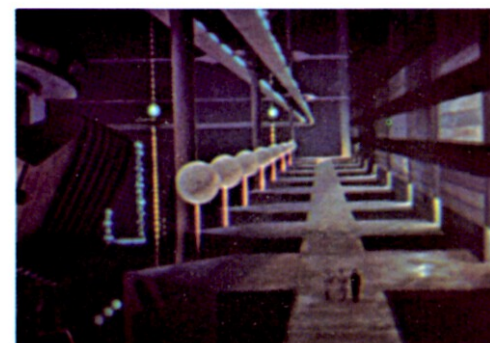
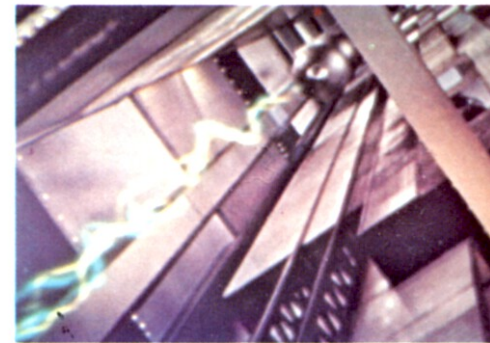
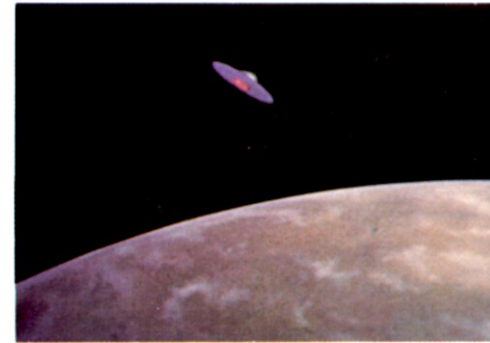
Steve Rubin is a freelance writer and film researcher based in Los Angeles. He is currently preparing a book entitled The Combat Films of World War II. His Retrospect of THEM! appeared in our previous issue.

Artist Jim Thomas lives in San Jose, California, and is a frequent exhibitor at the art shows of various science fiction conventions, such as the annual Westerncon, where he has won several prizes. Thomas is also a photographer and movie fan.

FORBIDDEN PLANET A Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Release. 1956. In Eastman Color and CinemaScope. 98 minutes. Produced by Nicholas Nayfack. Directed by Fred McLeod Wilcox. Screenplay by Cyril Hume. Based on a story by Irving Block and Allen Adler. Art directors, Cedric Gibbons and Arthur Lonergan. Set decorators, Edwin B. Willis and Hugh Hunt. Director of photography, George Folsey. Color consultant, Charles K. Hagedorn. Hair styles by Sydney Guilaroff. Makeup by William Tuttle. Assistant director, George Rhein. Special effects, A. Arnold Gillespie, Warren Newcombe, Irving G. Reis, and Joshua Meador through the courtesy of Walt Disney Productions. Electronic tonalities by Louis and Bebe Barron. Edited by Ferris Webster. Recording supervisor, Dr. Wesley C. Miller. Anne Francis' costumes by Helen Rose. Men's costumes by Walter Plunkett.

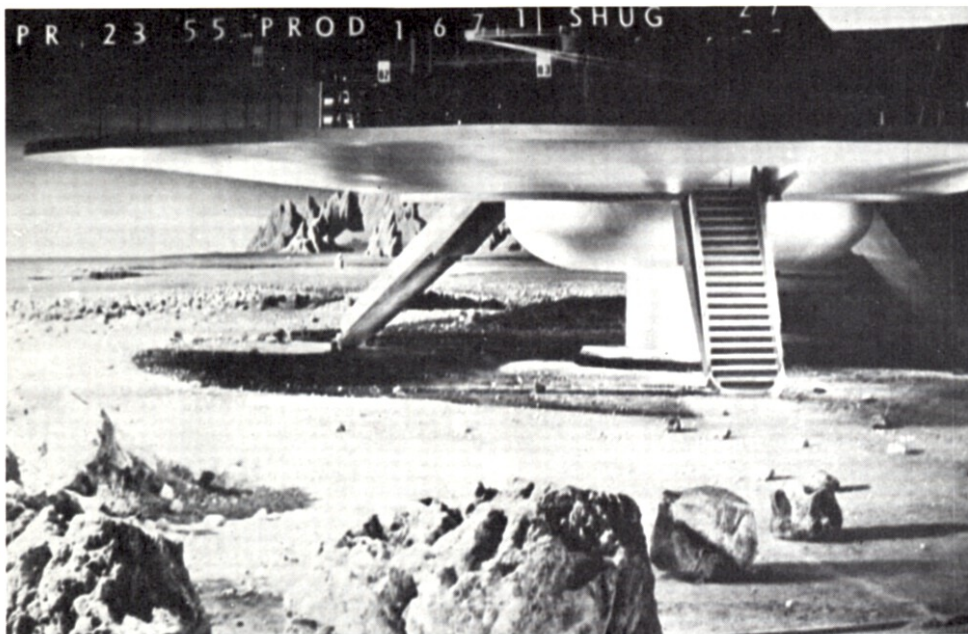
Dr. Morbius
 Walter Pidgeon
 Altaira Anne Francis
 Commander Adams
 Leslie Nielsen
 Lt. Doc Ostrow
 Warren Stevens
 Lt. Farman ... Jack Kelly
 Chief Quinn
 Richard Anderson
 Cook Earl Holliman
 Bosun ... George Wallace

Right: The miniature and composite matte photography of FORBIDDEN PLANET. Top: United Planets Cruiser C-57D arcs in for a landing on Altair 4. 2nd: The incredible ventilating shafts of the Krel power complex which descend, honey-comb like, a dizzying 7900 levels into the surface of Altair 4. 3rd and 4th: The Krel furnace, a vast energy complex which draws power from the very planet itself.





Behind the scenes of FORBIDDEN PLANET. Top: Anne Francis, Leslie Nielson, Jack Kelly, Morgan Jones and Warren Stevens relax between takes. Middle: The full-size mock-up of United Planets Cruiser C-57D as it sits on the surface of Altair IV. Note the supporting cables and the machinery which operates the saucer's down ramps. Bottom: Robby unmasked! Frankie Carpenter has removed the top half of the robot's rig and takes a breather between scenes. Opposite page: Pre-production sketches made by art director Arthur Lonergan of the interior and exterior of the Morbus "House of Tomorrow."



commercials, and where the dimensions of its CinemaScope picture and \$1,900,000 in production value is all but lost.

Tracking down the story behind the production of FORBIDDEN PLANET proved to be a formidable task, for reasons other than the *de facto* dissolution of MGM as a film production company. Nicholas Nayfack, the producer of FORBIDDEN PLANET, died in 1958. Fred McLeod Wilcox, the film's director, passed away in 1964. Of the magnificent special effects crew that consisted of A. Arnold Gillespie, Irving Ries, Warren Newcombe and Joshua Meador, only Gillespie now survives. The author of the film's screenplay, Cyril Hume, is also dead, as is Allen Adler who originally conceived the film and co-authored its original story. Fortunately, not all leads proved to be a dead end. I found Irving Block, who originally developed and sold the project to MGM with Allen Adler. Block is now a professor of Art at California State College at Northridge. I found Gillespie, the remaining living member of the film's special effects team, art director Arthur Lonergan and cinematographer George Folsey, all now retired. Louis Barron, who created the innovative electronic musical score for FORBIDDEN PLANET with his wife Bebe, now operates his own music studio in West Hollywood. Actors Warren Stevens and Walter Pidgeon ("Was I in that?") agreed to have their minds jogged. Stevens, you'll remember, had his mind "boosted" in the film. Other performers, such as Anne Francis, are tired of talking about the film and declined to be interviewed, and some, such as the talented Earl Holliman, are already amply on record concerning their participation in the film. Holliman, who played the cook on board the starship has called FORBIDDEN PLANET, with some justification, "the worst film I ever made." Finally, following up rumors that Robby the Robot was alive and well in West Hollywood, I found Bill Malone, a young film technician who has succeeded in reconstructing Robby from original plans and diagrams. From these and other sources it has been possible to piece together a fairly complete and accurate story of the production of FORBIDDEN PLANET.



Irving Block was no stranger to science fiction when he walked into the office of Nicholas Nayfack at MGM in the Spring of 1954, carrying the completed story proposal for a film called FATAL PLANET, which he had written with his friend Allen Adler. A painter by profession, Block had arrived in Hollywood in 1945, after serving in the War Department Geodetic Service as a map maker during WWII. With his extensive background in art, he began working in special effects with Fred Sersen at 20th Century-Fox, and was one of the first individuals in Hollywood to realize the importance of a new kind of screen entertainment, science fiction. "After the war," says Block, "you couldn't escape to the southseas with Bing Crosby and Dorothy Lamour. That was where they were doing the atomic tests. And you couldn't travel to the sands of Africa for the 'tits and sand' adventure proliferated by Tony Curtis and Universal studios. That whole continent was in turmoil. Thus Hollywood turned to outer space."

In 1949 Block left Fox to form Septa Productions, a special effects studio, with partner Jack Rabin. As their first project, they began to develop a film about man's conquest of the moon, but before they got beyond the planning stage, they learned that independent producer George Pal's production of DESTINATION MOON was already underway in Hollywood. They interested Robert Lippert, a large exhibitor turned film dis-

tributor, in their ideas and Lippert contracted them to do the special effects for ROCKETSHIP XM (Expedition Moon), a film then being made for his Lippert Pictures by producer Kurt Neumann. "It was a low-budget film," recalls Block sourly, "but it had some interesting ideas and it also managed to tap into the market already established for Pal's film."

With DESTINATION MOON, the science fiction film had officially "arrived" in Hollywood, and between 1950 and 1955 Block and Rabin worked doing the special effects on a succession of ill-conceived, low-budget films that exploited, rather than developed the new genre. During a lull in the partnership (the two would later collaborate on another series of low budget science fiction films including ATOMIC SUBMARINE, WAR OF THE SATELLITES and KRONOS), Block began an association with Allen Adler that was to lead to the production of FORBIDDEN PLANET.

Allen Adler (of the Adler acting family, Luther Adler was Allen's uncle) came to Block early in 1954. Experienced in selling a few stories to television, he suggested that they pool their talents and write a good science fiction tale. Although primarily a special effects technician (the eye monster of ATOMIC SUBMARINE is actually Block's arm), Block had done quite a bit of writing and was fond of mythology and the classics. He agreed to collaborate and suggested they use Shakespeare's "The Tempest" as a premise on which to build the science fiction story. "The Tempest" is Block's favorite play, and at the time he saw in it the opportunity to add a fresh angle to the repetitive and stagnating science fiction film genre.

In "The Tempest," Prospero is a magician who lives on an enchanted island with his beautiful daughter Miranda who has never seen men. Through the imagination of the two writers, the enchanted island became the planet Altair 4, thousands of light years from Earth. Prospero the magician became Morbius the philologist, and Miranda became Altaira, his daughter. Block snatched the name Morbius from his background in Geodesy. Moebius was the German mathematician who discovered the topological conundrum, the Moebius Strip, a two-dimensional figure with only one surface. The group of Italian nobles who visit the island in Shakespeare's play became the officers and crew of the United Planets Cruiser C-57D. To create the unforgettable Robby the Robot, Block combined the characters of Caliban, the hunchbacked witch-child, and the spirit Ariel. In the play, Caliban is a virtual slave to Prospero's will, while Ariel is a master at creating illusions and spells. Robby, reflecting both of these characteristics, gradually became the star of FORBIDDEN PLANET.

To add an extra dimension of terror to his film not found in Shakespeare, Block dipped into Freudian psychology, then in vogue with the general public, and came up with "monsters from the Id." "The idea of a beugyed monster is a pretty childish illusion," said Block, explaining the choice. "But there are real monsters and demons that exist within us that we know nothing about. We're capable of doing the most horrendous things and we're often shocked at this truism. The monster from the Id is nothing more than the invisible demonic spirit of Morbius. That's why the monster is invisible. In the very end MGM couldn't accept the fact of total invisibility so they got the Disney people to create an example of the Id. It was quite poor."

For other facets of FORBIDDEN PLANET, the two writers borrowed freely from numerous myths and legends, source material often used by Shakespeare himself. The chaste and pure Altaira enjoys an Edenic rapport with the transplanted Earth creatures who roam the lush, forrested grounds of the home of her father, yet when she kisses Commander Adams for the first time, a change transpires in her relationship with the beasts and her pet tiger nearly kills her. Block's inspiration for this sequence came from the myth which states that only a pure virgin can tame a unicorn. To Block, the myths consulted by the two writers as source material not only enriched the texture of their story, they demonstrated that there is always something fundamental in mythology—even in the far off future of Altair 4.

The two writers had figured out sell their fi-

nished story, entitled FATAL PLANET, to Allied Artists, a move which seemed quite logical to them since that studio was encouraging a great many science fiction projects at that time, including WORLD WITHOUT END, INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS and TARGET EARTH. Their agent disagreed with them. He encouraged them to "think big" and submit the story to MGM first. The two agreed that it was worth a try, and that, after all, there was always Allied Artists to turn to if they were turned down at MGM. Thus, FATAL PLANET was spared the fate of being yet another low-budget science fiction film.

On a crisp, spring morning in 1954, Block and Adler walked into the plush office of producer Nicholas Nayfack at MGM in Culver City, California. When Block offered him the story to read, Nayfack refused.

"You tell me what the story is about," he said professionally.

So, using his keen imagination, Block began to act out the story of FATAL PLANET. In a quiet raspy voice, he began to move around the room and whisper.

"You know, Mr. Nayfack, we have an invisible monster..." Before he could complete the sentence, Nayfack interrupted.

"How can you see an invisible monster?" he asked?

"You can't. That's the point. It's very scary. When you see something it's not half as frightening as your imagination," said Block, hoping the executive would agree.

"But how will you know it's there?" persisted Nayfack?

And then Block began to act out the monster, lurking around the room, at the same time, taking breaths in heavy gasps. For a moment he would hesitate and then he would move forward again.

"That's great!" exclaimed Nayfack, getting in the mood and realizing the possibilities.

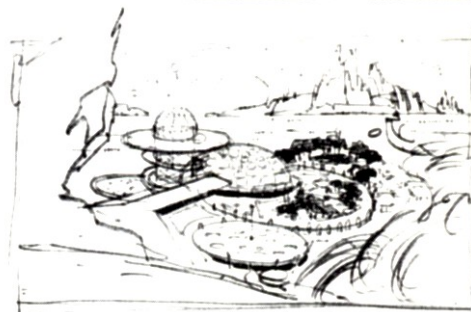
"The great thing about this," furthered Block, hoping to put the capper on the deal, "is that it won't cost you a cent to make the monsters. You could have a thousand of them!"

That bit of logic was quickly grasped by the producer, and Nayfack told them it was a deal. He was buying FATAL PLANET and putting it on the production schedule immediately.

The vast amount of enthusiasm born in Nicholas Nayfack's office that day soon dissipated. Dore Schary, the creative driving force at MGM was against the film. Unaware of the entertainment potential of FATAL PLANET, Schary was worried that the studio was going to follow its competitors and produce a cheap planetary adventure. But Nayfack bulldogged the New York office until they gave him permission to make the film. Nayfack hired a friend, Fred McLeod Wilcox to direct. Wilcox, a nephew of the Schenk brothers, had done very little since he gained fame in 1943 by discovering the entertainment possibilities of a beautiful collie in LASSIE COME HOME. But Nayfack had confidence in his pal Wilcox, and together they gathered the best production team then available at MGM. In many cases, the studio gave them the cold shoulder. Arthur Lonergan was pulled away from Cedric Gibbons art department and was given virtually no departmental assistance on the film. As A. Arnold Gillespie put it, "everybody thought we were nuts."

While the production crew went over some of the drawings submitted with the Block and Adler story, Nayfack hired Cyril Hume to write the screenplay for the film. Hume, a veteran writer, had developed some expertise in writing for exotic settings while working on Tarzan films. He would later pen the imaginative script for THE INVISIBLE BOY, Nayfack's only other science fiction project. Hume's script retained Block and Adler's basic narrative, but increased the role of the Krel, a futuristic super race discussed briefly in the original story. As Hume polished and revised the work, the film entered the pre-production phase and underwent a title change to FORBIDDEN PLANET (Fatal was thought to be too negative). Arnold Gillespie's attitude typified the general feeling among the film's crew for the overwhelming task ahead: "MGM had never made a science fiction film. This gave us a chance to create a new world outside our own solar system.

EXT. DR MORBIUS ESTATE

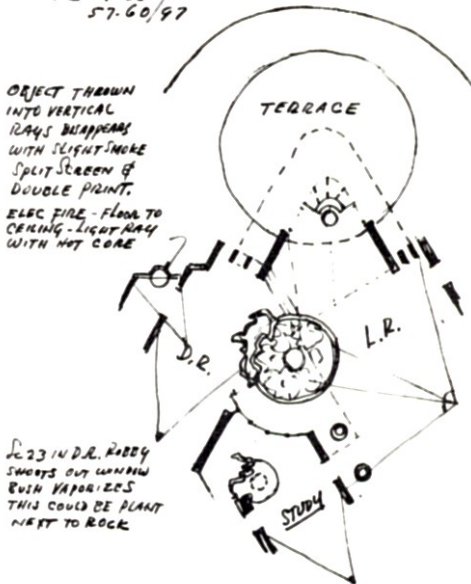


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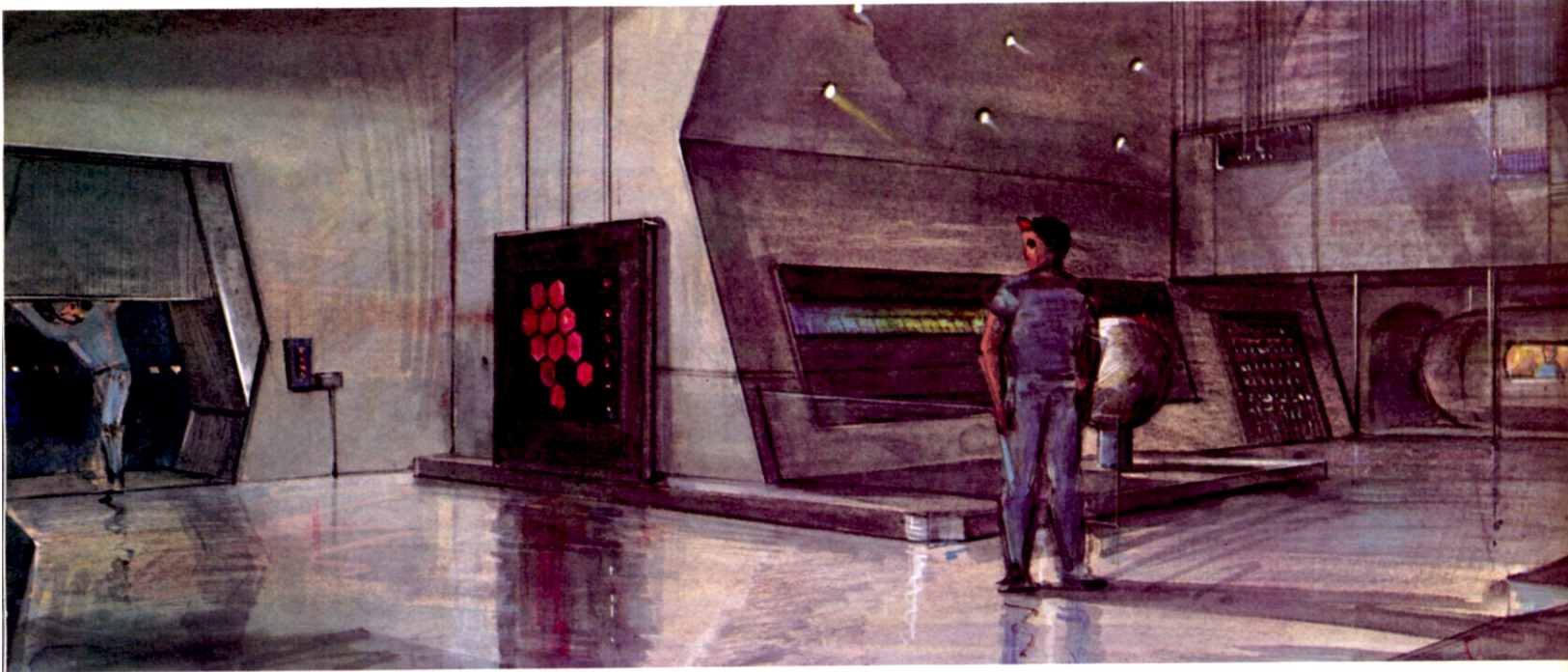
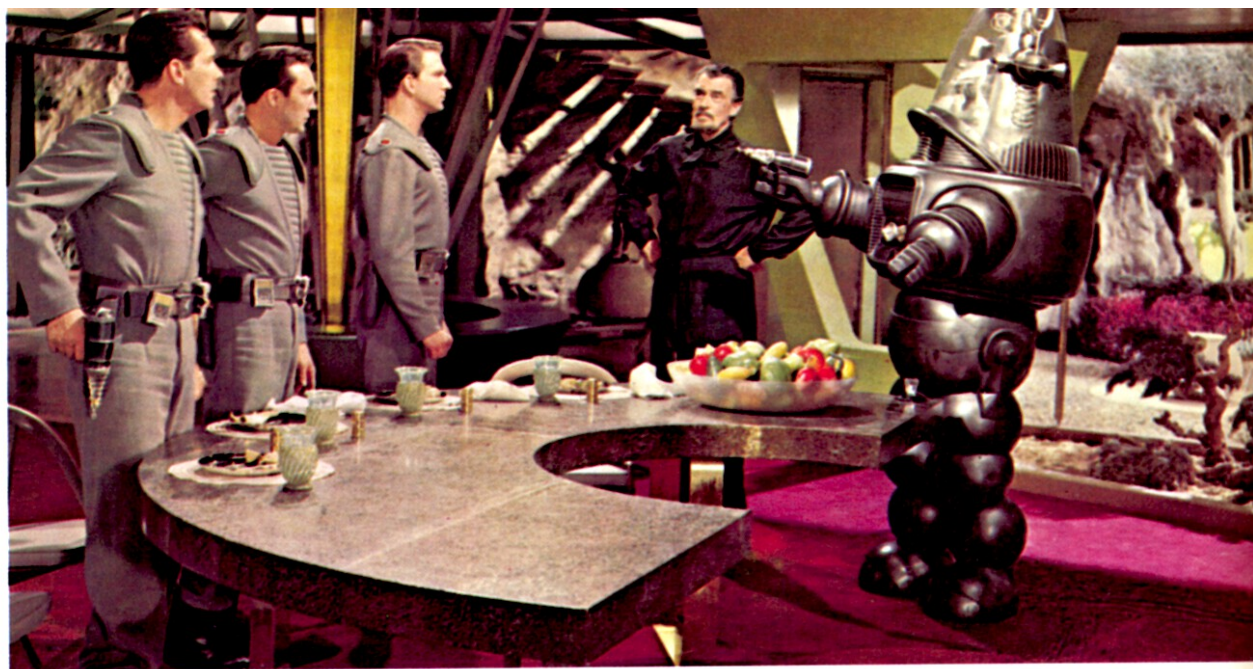
L.23 IN D.R. ROBBY SMOKES OUT WINDOW BUSH VAPORIZES THIS COULD BE PLANT NEXT TO ROCK

EXT. DR MORBIUS ESTATE

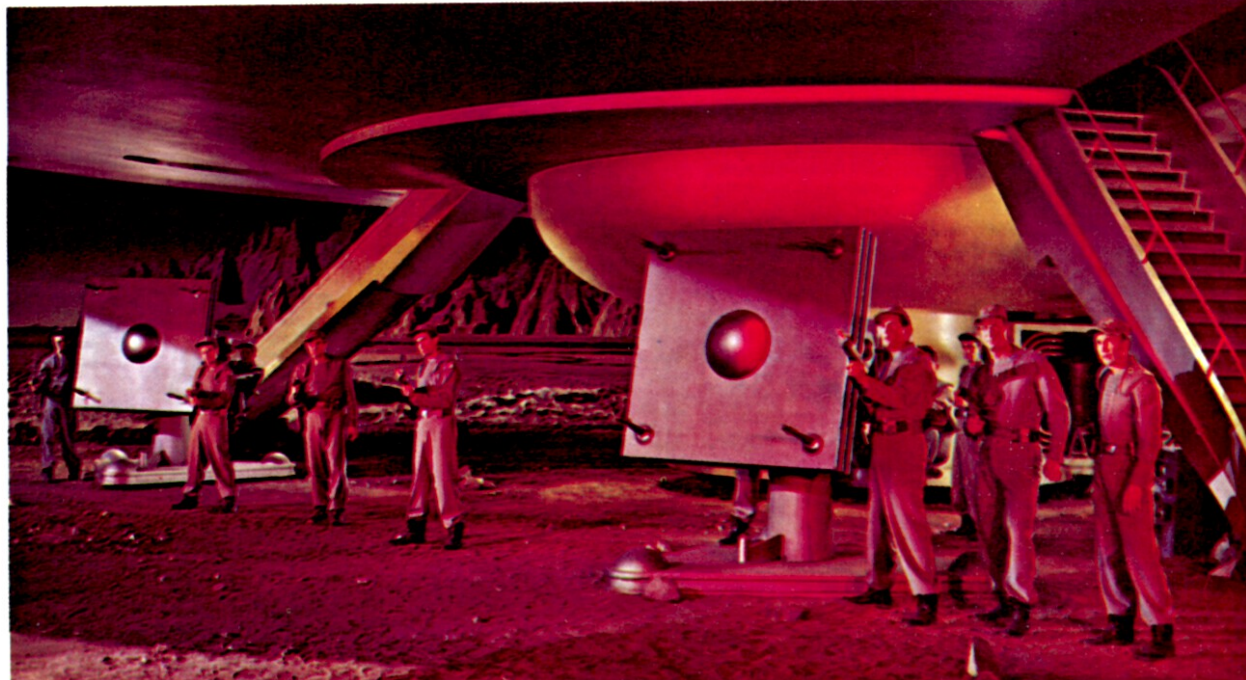
NOTE
APPROACH OF ID SKY FROM UPPER TERRACE TO SEE JUNCIE FOLIAGE PART IN PATH



Top: Morbius (Walter Pidgeon) demonstrates a unique feature of his programming for Robby, the Robot to (from left to right) Lt. Farman (Jack Kelly), Lt. Ostrow (Warren Stevens) and Commander Adams (Leslie Nielsen). He orders Robby to shoot the commander with his blaster. Middle: A pre-production painting by Irving Block of the interior of the Krel laboratories. Primarily an effects technician, Block submitted such paintings along with his original story to sell the idea of FORBIDDEN PLANET to MGM producer



Nicholas Nayfack. While Cyril Hume wrote the screenplay for the film from Block's original story, the MGM effects and art department utilized Block's paintings as the basis for the film's sets and production design. Bottom: The crew of United Planets Cruiser C-57D stand with their weapons at the ready for the onslaught of—what?—a terrible force they cannot see and can barely hear. The strengths of FORBIDDEN PLANET as a film are to be found in the excellence of its sets, special effects and production design.



It represented a wonderful opportunity. Nobody could prove us wrong. We could do almost anything."

Although it is true that MGM had not entered the industry-wide science fiction craze which followed WWII, there was a tradition at MGM before the war in creating fantasies on the sound stage. THE WIZARD OF OZ is an immediate example, but there were others. These included MYSTERIOUS ISLAND (1929), MASK OF FU MANCHU (1932), GABRIEL OVER THE WHITE HOUSE (1933), MEN MUST FIGHT (1933) and two Hal Roach shorts, TIN MAN (1935) and ROBOT WRECKS (1941). In addition, after the war, MGM released two films, BEGINNING OR THE END (1947) and THE NEXT VOICE YOU HEAR (1951), which illustrated a developing interest in a return to the fantasy film.

After getting the go-ahead from Nayfack, Gillespie and Lonergan, along with Warren Newcombe and set designer Hugh Hunt began experimenting with new ideas. "The interesting thing," says Lonergan, "is how to research a project like this. There is simply no place to go. You have to reach up to the stars and grab onto something. The art department was used to having a particular field of research. The only way to start on this film was to field a lot of ideas, let some go and latch onto the rest."

The production crew began with the concept of the starship. Influenced by the rash of UFO sightings bursting-out across the country at the time, United Planets Cruiser C-57D became a flying saucer. To elaborate on the basic saucer design the production crew traveled to a well-known arena of scientific debate—Cal. Tech. Says Gillespie: "The scientists were extremely helpful and gave us a lot of ideas. They looked over some of our sketches and approved of the designs for the crews quarters, the navigation devices and the control panels."

While the MGM miniature workshop created three model starships (one six feet in diameter, one forty-eight inches and one twenty inches), Robby's jeep, and the Krel underground complex, the scenic department, under the direction of George Gibson, began work on the 350 foot cyclorama depicting the Altairian surface. "Gibson was an elaborate genius at that sort of thing," remembers cinematographer George Folsey who was hired by friend Wilcox to lens FORBIDDEN PLANET. "When you stood at one end of the stage after the backing was completed, you almost couldn't believe you were on a stage. You had to walk right up to it to believe it was backing."

Leading up to Gibson's cyclorama was a vast expanse of pebbly rock and brush. Folsey's assignment required him to light the backing and the whole set in such a way that everything mixed with no color separation. For the day scenes the measurement for the entire cyclorama was set at 64 foot candles. The illumination also included a difficult set up around the 60 foot plywood cruiser. The balanced lighting arrangement created the illusion of a plain that stretched for hundreds of miles. When night came the lighting was reduced to a bare minimum. A tiny light lit up the horizon, representing the soft glow of Altair 4's twin moons. For the interior of the cruiser, several sets were designed. These included the workshop, the navigation center, the quarters for the crew and the multi-story control room, reminiscent of the bridge of the Enterprise in STAR TREK, a series which, years later, owed much of its inspiration to the basic concept of FORBIDDEN PLANET.

The design for Robby the Robot was based on the shape of the old-fashioned pot-bellied stove. Some of the more light-hearted members of the film crew thought he looked quite a bit like Nayfack himself. Gillespie later gave some rough sketches to Bob Kinoshita*, a Japanese draftsman who designed the interior of the starship and the mind-boggling underground complex of the Krel, and Robby was born. A natural star, the robot gave the film much of its comic flavor, especially in hilarious scenes with the ship's cook, played by newcomer Earl Holliman. Block and Adler

*Kinoshita is still a practicing Art Director in Hollywood and recently worked on the NBC World Premiere Movie THE DEAD DON'T DIE.

The pre-production sketches for FORBIDDEN PLANET made by art director Arthur Lonergan are shown at right, and on the preceding and following page. Given Cyril Hume's screenplay, Lonergan broke it down into the various interior and exterior sets required, sketching in the general appearance of each and making note of special props, effects, and process photography required. Such sketches are the first step in transferring a writer's concepts into film images. Not done for their aesthetic appearance, the sketches are utilitarian, serving as a blueprint for the entire production.

had researched the early works of Czech writer Karel Capek which included the play "R.U.R." (Rossum's Universal Robots) for the Robby character. The word robot, interestingly, comes from the Czech word robota, meaning work. And indeed, Robby works hard in the film, producing such varied items as a diamond studded dress for Altaira, fifty gallons of whisky for the cook, a atomic shielding for the space ship and a variety of tasty synthetic foods for the Morbius household. Block and Adler also exhibited their knowledge of science fiction by including in Robby's programming the three laws of robotics as proposed by Isaac Asimov, which includes the overriding directive to preserve and protect human life. Thus Robby symbolizes the harmonious synthesis of scientific advance and social good, at last the powerful tool which man is unable to turn upon himself.

Robby has a certain degree of class, due in large part to the voice provided by Marvin Miller, expressing a friendly, benign superiority. Unlike Gort, the terrifying robot of THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL, or H.A.L. 9000, the paranoid super-computer of 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY, Robby spends most of FORBIDDEN PLANET in a highly sympathetic role, and proved to be one of the film's most powerful science fiction concepts.

Producer Nicholas Nayfack revised Robby for another MGM film in 1958, THE INVISIBLE BOY. Block, who worked on the special effects for that film, views the transformation unfavorably, saying: "They corrupted poor Robby and made him into a heavy. He was always designed as a good robot, not as a destructive machine." The robot's career continued with appearances on television shows including episodes of THE THIN MAN, and THE PERRY COMO HOUR, two episodes of LOST IN SPACE (one episode titled "War of the Robots" pitted Robby against the Robinson's own robot), and most recently in an episode of COLUMBO. In 1971, MGM sold Robby to Movie World in Buena Park, California, where he appears on display in his retirement. Quite unknown to Robby is the fact that he now has two brothers, constructed recently by film technician Bill Malone in West Hollywood from the original plans of draftsman Bob Kinoshita. Robby II resides in Malone's living room and sometimes tidys-up the house while Malone is away. Robby III was constructed by a group of kids who began to congregate at Malone's house in increasing numbers once the word got out about his unique house guest. Thanks to Malone, every kid's dream to build his own robot came true for some, and who knows, one of those youngsters may be inspired to go on to build a true robot someday. For, if you hadn't already guessed, Robby is just a lifeless shell weighing only about 100 pounds. Like the charming little drone workers of SILENT RUNNING, it is only when a human host inside operates the many controls and levers that Robby comes alive. For FORBIDDEN PLANET, a succession of actors assumed the role, including former child star Frankie Darrow and prop man Frankie Carpenter, only to quit and be replaced. The claustrophobic confinement within Robby, the heat, the complex controls all made the role of Robby decidedly unpopular. Malone himself finds it remarkable that he hasn't yet been electrocuted while operating the robot from inside.

While FORBIDDEN PLANET had many amazing props, such as Robby, it was the Morbius House of Tomorrow that utilized the resources then available at MGM to best advantage. Like the starship set, the futuristic house had its own soundstage, complete with forested vegetation

EXT. ALTAIRIAN DESERT

MINIATURE

Sc 14/15 / PART OF 16 (DAY)

BLUE BLACK SKY



LARGE PLANETS BRILLIANT ODD COLORED SUNLIGHT ON GROUND & PLANETS IN SKY

SPACE SHIP CIRCLES INTO LANDINGFIELD TO POSITION.

ELECTRICAL & LIGHT EFFECTS

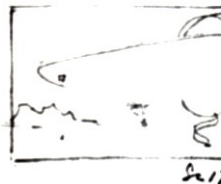


SPACE SHIP STARTS VERTICAL DESCENT. GLOW AT BOTTOM - SCOTCH LIGHT SOFT SMOKE & DUST - DOUBLE PRINT LIGHTENING FLASHES - CARTOON DOUBLE PRINT.



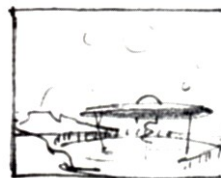
SPACE SHIP SETTLES IN WHILE SMOKE IS CLEARING LEGS DROP DOWN STAIR UNCREWS

Sc 17 (JEEP) (DAY)



PATH OF DUST THEN MINIATURE JEEP COMES SPREADING INTO PLACE.

Sc 39 (NIGHT)



NOTE FENCE & GROUND EQUIPMENT IN PLACE

NIGHT SHOT OF SPACE SHIP WITH 2 SENTRIES (SUMMIES)

Sc 39

EXT. SPACE SHIP

Sc 1

MINIATURE SHIP PAINTED BACKING BLACK SKY (BLUE REEL)



SPACE SHIP APPROX AS PIN POINT IN DISTANCE TRAVELS DIAGONALLY ACROSS SCREEN

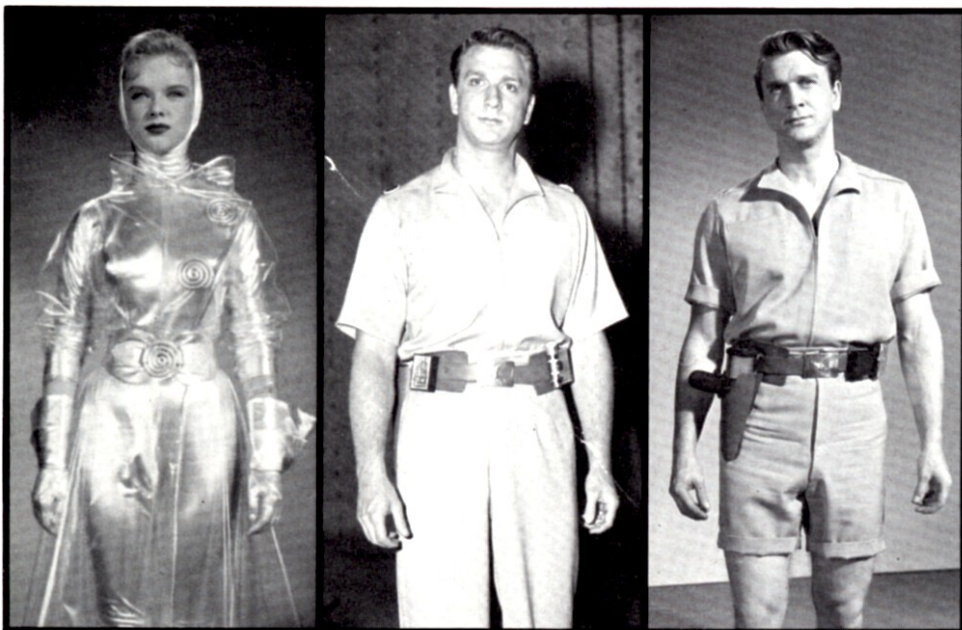
IT'S CONTINUATION COULD BE MANAGED BY HOLDING ON SKY AS SOUND QUICKLY DIES

OPAQUE BANG ON BACK WITH PLANETS LIGHTED FROM BEHIND

OR WE COULD PAN WITH SHIP & SEE IT DISAPPEAR



Top: A. Arnold Gillespie outside his California home holds a tiny, detailed model of the Robot jeep which appears early in the film. Gillespie directed the film's special effects crew. Middle: The costumes pictured at right and left are early designs circa March 1954, not used in the final film. Men's costumes were designed by Walter Plunket, and Helen Rose designed the strikingly beautiful outfits worn by Anne Francis. Bottom: The interior set of United Planets Cruiser C-57D. The footprint of the invisible Id monster sits on the table. Opposite page: The pre-production sketches of art director Arthur Lonergan.



and entrances to the Krel laboratories and underground complex. Like Ken Adam, who much later became acclaimed for the scope and complexity of his futuristic set design on the James Bond films, Arthur Lonergan on **FORBIDDEN PLANET** dispensed with the customary plans for Earth houses, concluding that, with its windows and doors it was too claustrophobic an atmosphere. Says Lonergan: "I made the assumption, which isn't too far-fetched now, that there need be no separation between the house and the forest. We had no windows in the Morbius home. Everything was futuristic in design. We tried to avoid using anything that would resemble an earthly appliance. I remember a frustrating moment after the set director had designed a special high back chair for Morbius' study. While preparing for a scene, Wilcox complained that the chair blocked his view and ordered it removed. It was replaced with a regular office swivel chair. It was only after tired old Cedric Gibbons came over and interceded that the error was corrected."

In the original story by Block and Adler, Morbius discovers an ancient civilization beneath his house. From this small bit of material, scriptwriter Cyril Hume created the Krel, a super race, annihilated systematically in the course of one night by "the monsters from the Id." After a new discovery giving them the power of mind over matter, the subconscious mind of the Krel super-intellect exploded in a cannibalistic nightmare of terror thousands of years before the Bellerophon carried Morbius to Altair 4. Now, only their super-efficient machines continued to survive, controlling the overwhelming power of an entire planet. Comprehension of the handiwork of the Krel is far beyond the understanding of even future man, and it is only when Morbius accidentally has his intellect boosted a thousand-fold on a Krel learning machine intended for children that he begins to uncover some of the Krel's scientific secrets. But unknown to Morbius, his super-mind is now capable of the deadly Krel power of mind over matter, and it is his primitive subconscious which begins a new reign of terror on the crew of the star cruiser with all the power of the Krel civilization at its command.

To recreate the civilization of the Krel, the MGM art and special effects departments combined to construct three futuristic settings. The first of these was simply a series of corridors which lead to the Krel laboratory. The design for these corridors reflected an early desire among the production crew to picture the Krel. The doors are somewhat diamond-shaped illustrating that the alien race was of a short, hefty stature. In the original production design, the gateway to the Krel laboratory was a long series of wide steps. These, according to Folsey, were not steps at all, but runways: "The Krel were originally froglike in nature with two long legs and a big tail. They were never shown, but it was indicated in the original screenplay that the runways were designed to accommodate their dragging tail!" The rock walls in all of the tunnels, including those that lead to the underground city were made of a plastic material cast directly from molds of real rock. Folsey recalls the authenticity of these passageways: "You could walk right up to the wall and it would look like the real thing, yet, two men would come over and pick up that very same wall and carry it away."

While Prospero in "The Tempest" commands invisible magic and mischievous spirits, the power of Morbius is quite a bit more concrete. The eccentric philologist spends most of his spare time in the Krel laboratory deciphering the know-



ledge of the alien race by scanning a computer-like device. The rest of the immense room consists of a group of unusual machines that include the Brain Boost and a matter transmitter. Beyond this laboratory is the untouched remains of the Krel civilization, a fascinating miniature designed by the special effects crew headed by A. Arnold Gillespie. Fifty yards in length and filmed horizontally along the floor of a soundstage, the engineering that went into the miniature reflects the painstaking detail apparent also in Robby, and the film's full-scale settings.

One of the more interesting scenes in the film follows Morbius as he takes Commander Adams, Doc Ostrow and Lt. Farnor on a tour of just one of the 7900 levels of the Krel power complex that once ran an entire planet. Filming the four men being dwarfed by the colossal machines of the Krel required a matte shot showing the group crossing a bridge over a ventilating shaft which descended a dizzying 7900 levels below. For the scene, Wilcox took a crew to the Bekins Van and Storage building in Hollywood. It was the tallest building nearby and provided a clear view of a large parking lot below. With the parked automobiles cleared away, Wilcox sent Folsey's camera crew to the top of the building. Using a group of midgets hired to duplicate the actors, the scene was filmed showing the four little men walking below. The miniature replicas of the Krel machinery were later matted into the background for the finished effect. At its deepest point, the miniature Krel complex featured a mirrored George Gibson backdrop giving the effect of a full 7900 levels.

In the final scenes of the film, the monster from the Id breaks through a barrier of solid Krel metal to attack Morbius, a sequence requiring an interesting combination of live-action and miniature sets. The Krel door, serving as the supposedly impenetrable barrier, was a miniature sheet of lead designed to burn easily. On the back of the door was pasted some highly combustible liquid that would ignite the lead. Once ignited, the metal changed colors repeatedly, going from gray to red and then to white, simulating the heat being generated on the other side by a monster tapping into the almost limitless power of the Krel machines.

Filming the assault of the Id monster on the starship presented major problems. At first, the writers were against picturing the creature. Nayfack, originally convinced by Block that the invisible beast was satisfactory, reversed himself and hired animator Josh Meador of Walt Disney Studios to devise some version of the Id monster that would be visible to audiences. It was Loneragan, however, who came up with the idea of a huge head with piercing eyes that would become visible in the power discharge of the Cruiser's defense system. In its final form, the Id monster is a lion-shaped head resting on two powerful legs, with a distinct, unearthly roar. The animated sequence in which the outline of the creature becomes visible is quite short, possibly giving credence to the story that a dispute arose between MGM and Disney, forcing Meador to quit before his work was totally finished. Throughout most of the film the monster from the Id resembles the invisible beast mimicked by Block in Nayfack's office. There is a sense of eerie movement communicated by Folsey's camera, a degree of hesitation, and a weird sound effect created by Louis and Bebe Barron combined with lapses of total silence. When the beast attacks the starship it leaves a trail of footprints in the Altairian dust. These giant impressions were wood boxes cut out in the shape of the creature's giant feet, covered with sand and wired electrically to open and create the effect of a depression as the creature's huge feet rose and fell invisibly onto the surface of Altair 4.

The actual production of FORBIDDEN PLANET began in early 1955, a full year after Block and Adler's first visit with producer Nicholas Nayfack, and the film took six months to complete. During the fourteen months between June 1955 and the initial release of the film in August 1956, the major editing of the film was completed by Ferris Webster as the special effects department worked to complete all of the laborious matte shots involved in the special effects.

It was during this post-production period that

Dore Schary took an interest in the film he had once opposed and hired Louis and Bebe Barron to create the electronic music that accompanies the film at every turn. FORBIDDEN PLANET, more so than most science fiction films, loses a great deal in its transition to television, not only in the size of its wide-screen Cinemascope image, but also in its strangely innovative musical score and soundtrack. In an age where even police sirens are going electronic to the nth degree, the vivid "tonalities" created by Louis and Bebe Barron for this film still represent one of the great revolutions in film scoring.

Lou Barron's West Hollywood music studio is now crowded with the aging paraphernalia associated with electronic music. Before playing about ten minutes of the film's original score on his large, full range music system, Barron asks whether I can survive high frequencies. I nod in approval and he, like some musical necromancer, opens the speakers all the way, unleashing the overwhelming power of the FORBIDDEN PLANET overture. It is a fantastic, new experience. We are joined by friend Bebe, the two are now divorced, and once more as a team they relate their perseverance in overcoming Hollywood's reluctance to change the pattern of scoring feature motion pictures.

Electronic music, today, is quite blasé. Its advancement, in the most part due to rock music (Emerson, Lake & Palmer, Rick Wakeman and others) has been quite rapid since 1956 when the soundtrack of FORBIDDEN PLANET was first heard. With the Barrons, it all began with a marriage gift they received in December, 1947: a tape recorder. The miracle of post-war productivity had finally resulted in the commercial distribution of the machine, although even then they were still a unique possession. Having previous musical background (Lou as drummer and radio bug and Bebe as a singer and pianist) they found the recorder intriguing, particularly in the discovery that the machine was capable of emitting some highly unusual sounds. A friend, John Cage, an *avant garde* composer, was experimenting with electronic sound at the time, which he referred to as "taped music." After reading M.I.T. professor Weiner's treatise on Cybernetics, Barron began to consider the bizarre feedback sounds he was getting on his tape machine more seriously, and with Cage and pianist David Tudor, the Barrons received a grant from architect Paul Williams to experiment in the field of electronic sound. Out of this six-month research project came a great deal of experience and a short musical piece titled "Electronic Nervous System."

Excited about their new discoveries, the Barrons decided to study the field of electronic circuitry. Barron was fascinated by Weiner's definition of Cybernetics as the science of communication and control in animals and machines. They began researching into the laws governing the new forms of circuit behavior as discussed in Weiner's treatise. As Barron explains: "Our findings encouraged us to go ahead and construct electronic circuits. We felt, continually, that their activity patterns were quite similar to primitive living organisms. If not for Weiner's theories, we would have dismissed our interest in electronic sounds as being irrational."

Through patience and perseverance after a series of commercial failures and a strong desire to spread their ideas, the Barrons were eventually able to bring their unique world of resistors, capacitors, wires and vacuum tubes (now read transistors) to the screen. Between 1949 and 1953, the Barrons used their electronic music in a series of experimental films. One of their early compositions was used in a film based on the writings of Nim called THE BELLS OF ATLANTIS. Impressed by the compliments they were receiving from fellow musicians, the Barrons attempted to enter the motion picture business, hoping a contract could net them a few thousand dollars for their work. Through the grapevine they discovered that Dore Schary was the man to see. Says Barron: "He was the number one guy in the industry, so we decided we might as well shoot for the moon. Besides, we also heard he was a nice human being." Through a friend they learned that Dore Schary's wife was a painter and that she was having a one-woman show at a New York Gallery. Living in Greenwich

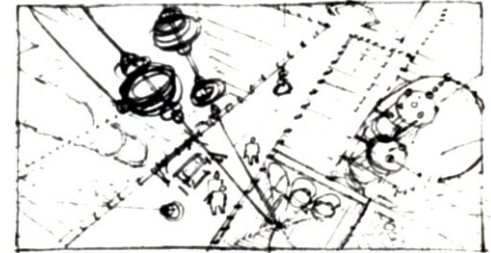
INT ELECTRONICS ROOM

Sc 64-66



NOTE
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SET-UP.

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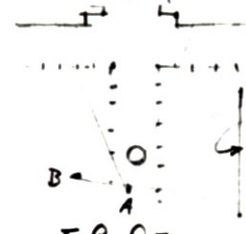


FLICKERING MATH BULD.



- THIS SHOT
NEVER SHOT
OR MINIATURE
IF MIN. WE
SHOULD SOCCY
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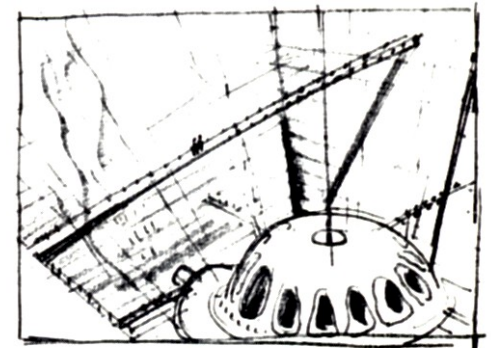
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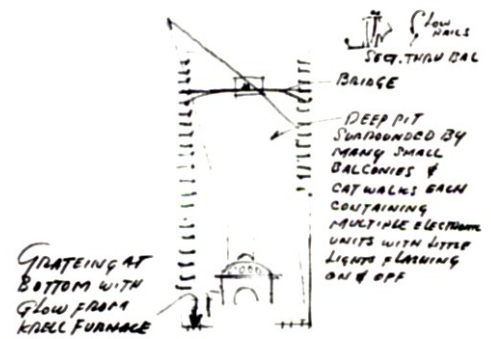
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Sc 64-66



NOTE
MINIATURE-PROCESS
OR MATTE PAINTINGS & PROCESS



GRATEINGS AT
BOTTOM WITH
GLOW FROM
KRELL FURNACE

BRIDGE
DEEP PIT
SURROUNDED BY
MANY SMALL
DOLPHINS &
CAT WALKS EACH
CONTAINING
MULTIPLE ELECTRONIC
UNITS WITH LITTLE
LIGHTS FLASHING
ON & OFF

Village at the time, the two musicians decided to crash the showing in the hope that Dore would be there for the opening.

Says Barron proudly: "We crashed the show's opening alright. There were all these terribly impressive people standing around, everybody feeling really important, so we looked around for the person who would probably look the least important. We spotted him and sure enough it was Schary. Now we knew that Schary had personally produced a film called *BAD DAY AT BLACK ROCK*. It was a controversial film at the time and the critics were wild about it. We told Schary that we liked it and he appeared to be pleased. After all, everybody likes to be appreciated, but we really meant it. We were quite lucky that we had something to latch onto for openers."

After establishing this "in," the Barrons told Schary about their musical discoveries. Interested, Schary gave them a standing invitation to come to MGM when they were on the west coast. Impulsively, they immediately decided to drive cross-country and stay with Bebe's parents who lived in Los Angeles. Barely two weeks later they were on the phone to Schary.

"When can you come over?" Schary said, recognizing Lou's voice.

"We're free this afternoon, how about three?" replied Barron, hardly believing this all was happening.

Schary agreed and the interview was confirmed. The Barrons had prepared some tapes, a record and had also brought along some film clips from *THE BELLS OF ATLANTIS*. Politely refusing the films, Schary preferred to listen to the tapes, visualizing in his mind footage from *FORBIDDEN PLANET* which had already completed filming. Schary was impressed and hired the two New York musicians to score a portion of MGM's new science fiction film. Twenty-four hours later the Barrons received word that Schary had given interdepartmental orders to the effect that everything possible was to be done to assist them in their efforts, but problems soon developed.

First it was feared that the Barrons might be infringing on someone's patent rights and that MGM could be charged with patent infringement. The motion picture industry at the time was very patent conscious, with a continual battle occurring between Western Electric and RCA, tearing the film capitol apart. Patent searches were conducted in Washington, D.C. and weeks were spent with patent attorneys to make it clear that the new electronic music was a unique concept.

In September, 1955, the contract with MGM was finally signed. For a short contract, it featured an elaborate number of clauses, Barron remembers: "Rudy Monte drew up the contract. It was very frustrating to deal with him. He was Viennese and everytime we upset him with a contract idea he would yell, 'Oh, my heart!' It was exasperating. In addition, we were negotiating without a lawyer or an agent with the toughest contract lawyer in the business. We could do a couple of paragraphs per session and a couple of sessions per week—and it was a short contract! It was written in beautiful English, like a Supreme Court document. It wasn't written in legalese at all but with the characteristic literary style of Rudy Monte. It was filled with little clauses that sounded so casual."

The contract negotiations completed, the Barrons were introduced to Johnny Green and the MGM music department. The Barrons and all studio staff composers met at Green's house one evening where their experimental tapes were played and it was explained that the new music was to be featured in *FORBIDDEN PLANET*. It was a debut filled with enthusiasm, for the electronic music received the approval of the entire gathering who realized its potential for use with the MGM science fiction feature. With the studio now in complete agreement, Schary invited the Barrons to transfer their equipment west and begin work on the score. "This was impossible," says Barron. "It would have been ridiculous to transfer all of our equipment to Hollywood for a three month job. We were happy in the Village and we naturally refused Schary's offer." Fortunately, their electronic music was now much desired for the film and MGM agreed to let them construct their musical composition in New York, the first time the studio had ever contracted for a

musical score outside of Hollywood.

With what Lou Barron refers to as a beautiful contract, the two musicians returned to their Greenwich Village studio to begin work. When the contract was completed it was agreed that the new electronic music would provide only a portion of the film's soundtrack, though it was flexible. If MGM used absolutely nothing of their score, they would receive \$5000. If as little as three seconds were used, they could expect a minimum of \$10,000. Beyond that, earnings were to be determined on a per screen minute basis. The twenty-five minute score for the film would eventually net the two musicians \$25,000. "They really got a deal," recalls Barron. "We did all the recording and editing ourselves. We brought them a complete soundtrack."

The score for *FORBIDDEN PLANET* represents a great many circuits designed by the Barrons. These interesting compositions ranged from the hesitating "beta beat" of the Id monster, to the bubbly sounds associated with Robby the Robot. Many of the sounds that reached the screen were collages of different circuits taped by the Barrons and stacked like building blocks—the same principle on which the moog synthesizer now works. Some of these themes involved as many as seven different component sounds, each representing a separate circuit. "From the beginning, we discovered that people compared them with sounds they heard in their dreams," says Barron. "When our circuits reached the end of their existence (an overload point) they would climax in an orgasm of power, and die. In the film, many of the sounds seem like the last paroxysm of a living creature." Some of the circuits were nameless, but a few of these were derived from some of their favorite music. The theme used as night fell on the planet Altair 4 came from a song called "Night With Two Moons."

By January, 1956, the score was finished. With Schary's approval, the final version was used throughout the entire picture, eliminating a time consuming quest for additional orchestrated material. For the next six weeks, the Barrons would supervise the integration and mixing of their music onto the soundtrack of *FORBIDDEN PLANET*. Before the final dubbing session, he took the raw tapes to a preview. In the middle of the theatre a sound technician worked a tape recorder which had been synchronized with the projector. As the film progressed, the technician would adjust the volume, treble, base and balance controls, testing the range of the innovative new sounds. During the early scene where the starship lands on Altair 4, the mixer opened the volume controls and the eerie sounds poured out of the giant theatre speakers. The audience erupted in spontaneous applause. Composers have frequently been appalled by the quality of their scores once they are transferred to tape, comparing mixing to spreading peanut butter with a knife. But Louis and Bebe Barron were quite pleased that night.

When the preview ended, film editor Ferris Webster told Barron in amazement: "I can't believe it! They used my rough cut." Webster had only then recently left MGM to work on another project, assuming the studio would assign a new editor to finish the work on *FORBIDDEN PLANET*. They did not, and the final version of the film, thus, is only a rough cut. It is due to this shortsightedness in the final editing that many of the scenes in the film do not blend quite properly. The Barrons themselves had been rushed to complete their final music editing by a March 1 deadline. MGM was anxious to finish the film by this deadline in order to avoid paying over \$60,000 in California property taxes. In their haste, or through an oversight, studio executives had decided that Webster's rough cut was good enough.

A final problem did arise over screen credit for the musical contribution of the Barrons. In the original contractual agreement the credit was to have read "electronic music by Louis and Bebe Barron." Prior to the film's release, however, Rudy Monte circulated a memorandum among the executives at MGM which read: "Do you suppose that perhaps the musicians union will say that they have jurisdiction over this if we call it electronic music?" This new anxiety raised, the Barrons were confronted to renegotiate their contract. Everyone agreed that "electronic music"

was a harmless credit, but to be on the safe side they searched for something else, and it was Dore Schary himself who came up with that great euphemism "electronic tonalities" to describe their work. Says an exasperated Barron: "It was law suit proof!"

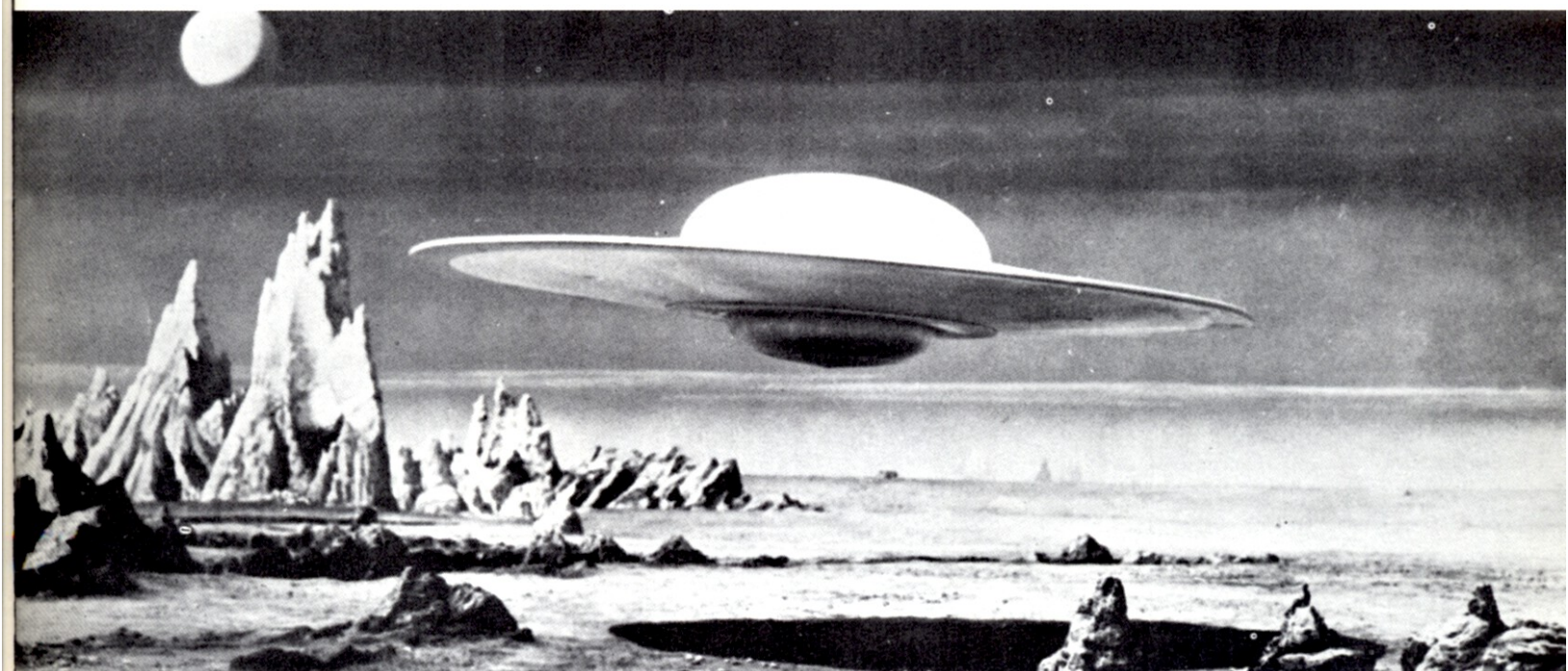
The score of *FORBIDDEN PLANET* represented a complete breakthrough in film music. Aside from the unique classical orchestrations of Bernard Herrmann for some early science fiction films, most of the musical accompaniment associated with the genre had lacked a degree of originality that was present in the Barrons' work. All the fantastic elements of *FORBIDDEN PLANET*: the starship's voyage through deep space, the mystery of Altair 4, the horror of the Id, are brought more vividly into being because of the exotic mixture of the electronic sounds of Louis and Bebe Barron.

Unlike many of the space exploration films that formed a distinct sub-genre of *cinéfantastique* in the 1950s, *FORBIDDEN PLANET* managed to sustain a distinct element of class. The non-sensory portrayal of Morbius by Walter Pidgeon was able to overshadow a triteness in the characterizations of the other roles, not a fault of the performers, but a weakness in Hume's screenplay that was perhaps his only concession to general public tastes. The beauty of young Anne Francis as well as the primacy of her relationship to Leslie Nielsen helped the film to transcend the simple "sex in space" scenario. Nielsen's handsome features as well as a dynamic screen presence as Commander Adams allow him to make the role, if a stereotype, at least a classic one. Nielsen is the captain and one observes how right it is that it is he who pilots the fated S.S. Poseidon to disaster in Irwin Allen's *THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE*. For its time, *FORBIDDEN PLANET* was the most ambitious attempt to create a serious yet fantastic outer space adventure. It combined a superior and highly original story concept with a level of special effects craftsmanship that was to presage the visual spectacle of later cinematic journeys into the unknown such as *FANTASTIC VOYAGE* and *2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY*. In successfully blending the fantasy of Shakespeare and the legitimate horror of Freudian psychology with the sense of wonder inherent in the exploration of deep space, the film more than compensates for its basic flaws in writing and direction. At a time when *2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY* continues to garner millions of dollars at the box-office year after year, when films like *HOUSE OF WAX* have been successfully and profitably reissued, and when distributors like Columbia begin to see the worth in old classics like Ray Harryhausen's *THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD* which they will distribute again theatrically this spring, it seems both a waste and an oversight that *FORBIDDEN PLANET* continues to languish in that twilight zone of neglect called television syndication. And while the record industry sees a boom in the sale of motion picture soundtrack albums that has seen the exhumation of scores from the '30s, '40s, '50s and even '60s by such composers as Korngold, Herrmann, Newman and Rozsa, it too seems both a waste and an oversight that the vibrant electronic tonalities of Louis and Bebe Barron which presaged the moog musical realities of the '70s remains totally unavailable when, with the eclipse of stereo and the advent of the quadrophonic age of sound it can now be enjoyed uniquely as never before. *FORBIDDEN PLANET* is hardly a lost film, or even a neglected one. Among the many fans of the genre it is highly regarded for its many achievements and the unique place it occupies in the evolution of the science fiction film, but even among most buffs its reputation has been earned through its discovery on television where its image, scope and quality of sound are reduced to the most mundane proportions. What wouldn't any of us give to see *FORBIDDEN PLANET* again as it was intended, in Cinemascope on the large theatre screen, with a proper speaker system, powerful amplification and good acoustics. The public, as we, would surely respond to the film's unique beauty and exciting entertainment potential which can be appreciated today perhaps more than ever. MGM, are you listening? Are you there?

OCFQO



Top: The bridge of United Planets Cruiser C-57D, designed by art director Arthur Lonergan and Bob Kinoshita. Leslie Nielsen (standing) converses with Morbius on the surface of Altair 4 as Jack Kelly (left) and Richard Anderson (right) sit at their controls. Morbius provides the starship with a cold reception, warning them not to land. Middle: The starship sets down on the surface of Altair 4. The scene is a breathtaking combination of model animation special effects with the painted background of the planet's surface, an eerie, yet



strikingly beautiful cyclorama constructed under the direction of art director Cedric Gibbons. Bottom: Trapped inside the fortress of Morbius' House of Tomorrow as the monster from the Id seeks entrance from without. Commander Adams (Leslie Nielsen) holds Altaira (Anne Francis) close in anticipation, as Robby the Robot stands by helplessly while Morbius (Walter Pidgeon) refuses to accept the truth: that the bestial force terrorizing the surface of the planet is the creation of his own subconscious mind.



ANATOMY OF A HORROR FILM

A round-table discussion with producers Karl Hardman and Russell Streiner and screenwriter John Russo about the making and the unmaking of their controversial horror film NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD.

A dead body sits smack in the middle of Hardman Associates' studio in downtown Pittsburgh. It's propped in a chair in the path to the conference room, which probably explains why newcomers to the studio are sometimes late for meetings. Actually, it's a mannequin, but I've heard rumors the thing moves about the place at night. It serves as a calling card for anyone who might get lost while looking for someone who had something to do with a film called NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD. It lets you know you're in the right vicinity.

NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD has been called a fluke, a classic, a gross, outrageous money-grabber and a good second feature for a drive-in double-bill. Not necessarily in that order. It's also been called a symbolic work that succeeds in bringing to light the pressures and terror of a ruthless society. Whatever it may be, the fact is that NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD is one of the most successful horror films ever made. It continues to play theatres on top of double bills six years after its initial release. It continues to draw crowds. It continues to scare the living daylight out of its audience.

There is something unique about NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD that is hard to put your finger on. It might be because it is a sincere project by a group of Pittsburgh filmmakers who had never tackled a feature-length film before. It could be the way it was shot: the grainy, stark nakedness which floods the screen. It's like stripping off the clothes and showing the bones. NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD has a little of everything to satisfy most customers. There's the gore, the flowing blood. There's violence galore. There's an uncompromising ending that leaves most viewers dumbfounded. There's even a nude...before nudes were popular in horror films. In the last analysis, this unique film succeeded because it was the kind of film audiences hungered for. Simply, it was the right movie to come along at the right time. And it was honest. What it promised its audience, it gave them in full measure, even far exceeding most expectations.

This article is a round-table discussion I conducted with the producers of the film, Karl Hard-

man and Russell Streiner, and the film's screenwriter, John Russo. Karl Hardman is the president of Hardman Associates in Pittsburgh, a company specializing in industrial films, commercials, multi-media shows and recording. He also played the role of Harry Cooper in the film. Russell Streiner and John Russo are the owners of New American Films in Pittsburgh, formed in May, 1971 to produce commercials, industrial and sales films. Streiner also played the role of Johnny in the film, one of the early victims of the living dead. Russo also appeared in the film as various ghouls.

I got to know these individuals while working at Hardman Associates, where the topic of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD and its production frequently comes up in general conversation. It soon became apparent to me that the genesis of this key work in the horror film genre is largely misunderstood, due to the fact that the attention the film has received has focused on only one individual, George Romero. Romero wrote the original story on which the film is based, and directed, photographed and edited the film. His contribution to the success of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD cannot be minimized, and it is not the purpose of this article to do so. What does emerge from the transcribed conversation with Hardman, Russo and Streiner is that the film is not the work of one man. But in addition to giving credit where credit is due, the frank, casual, off-the-cuff conversation delves into the mechanics of how an independent horror film comes to be made and released, providing an accurate and interesting look at the anatomy of a horror film.

Interview conducted by Gary Anthony Surmacz

Gary Anthony Surmacz is a freelance producer of industrial films and television commercials, living in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. An extensive journalistic background includes editing positions on several Pittsburgh newspapers and magazines. Formerly, he managed the film division of Hardman Associates before entering into independent film production. Gary is still in love with his journalistic origins and is still the tallest movie critic in Pittsburgh.

Left: A chilling scene from the conclusion of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD. The door of the farmhouse bursts open giving entrance to the ghouls, and Judith O'Dea looks at a face of terror, the corpse of her dead brother, Johnny (Russell Streiner).

CFQ: Why did you choose a horror film for your first venture? Is it because it is the easiest film to make, and the easiest to sell?

HARDMAN: I think we all agreed it would be the most commercial film we could produce.

STREINER: You have to understand that the production of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD began a little over six years ago. And let's face it, it was the first feature any of us had been involved in. I think Karl [Hardman] might have been involved with something on the West Coast years back, but certainly not in the role of producer. And frankly, we had to do the kind of picture that we were almost assured of being able to sell. A horror film seemed to fit the bill. We did not have a distribution deal when we started into production. We did it on our money and our investors' money, and then secured the distribution deal.

CFQ: I take it that everything concerning NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD started at Latent Image with George Romero, the director, and then the three of you came into it?

STREINER: That's only partially correct. George and I, for example, were the two owners of Latent Image. I think the idea originated over lunch one day between George and John [Russo], and they came back and announced that we were going to do a horror film.

RUSSO: It was actually George, a fellow named Richard Ricci and myself. We were having lunch and wondered how much longer we were going to go on making commercials. We always wanted to do features. So I suggested getting a group together, putting up a little money out of our own pockets, to try to get the ball rolling and do a horror film. We mentioned Karl and Marilyn [Eastman]* as possibilities right away. We went back and told the idea to Russ. He got excited about it and started working up figures to see just how cheaply we could produce a feature if we shot 35mm black and white. Then, a couple days later, we sat down and talked about it with Karl and Marilyn.

HARDMAN: And, of course, we were very interested. We also had been wanting to go into motion picture production, but we were not nearly as able as Latent Image. Latent Image was a film house at the time.

STREINER: That original group mushroomed to some ten people. That included Karl, Marilyn,

*Marilyn Eastman, who played Helen in the film, is a vice-president and creative director at Hardman Associates.

George Romero, Richard Ricci, a cousin of Romero's associated with Latent Image. Ruddy Ricci, John, myself, and a few other people. These ten named a corporation to produce the film called Image Ten; and once the corporation was formed, we secured our investment.

CFQ: John, how did you become involved in writing the script?

RUSSO: George wrote an original story and it was up to the point where the people came out of the basement of the house. I think that's the first thing you saw, Karl, when you decided that you wanted to be part of the project. You saw an incomplete script first and then... maybe you don't remember?

HARDMAN: I really don't.

RUSSO: But everybody said yeah, this is good, this is right on with what we should do. A couple of other ideas had already been kicked around. Then Karl, Marilyn, George and I, together, figured out an action outline of what should happen from that point on in the script. Then, sort of by default, I ended up writing the screenplay we began shooting with. I took the work George had written and all the notes from our discussions and came up with the finished script. The screenplay itself was a community effort. Unfortunately, there's been a lot of publicity scrambling among some of the people involved, and there's been a lot of misconception about how the picture came to be. I think, in actuality, whether, for instance, Karl and Russ were the producers of the picture, and I have the credit as screenwriter and George as director and so on, all of those categories merged. There was a group of anywhere from five to ten people. I think you could safely say the picture would not have been made without the presence of any one of them. It was very much a community effort. We had tremendous support from Karl's friends and Karl's and Marilyn's associates, as well as our own associates and clients. You know, advertising people. Ad executives came out to be ghouls and to sit there fooling around with bones and livers from slaughtered animals. There were about 250 extras in the film and we could never have made the picture without their support.

CFQ: In the beginning, was the film intended to be done under the aegis of a separate corporation or by the existing Latent Image?

STREINER: It was intended to be made under a separate corporation. There were several inherent problems had we done it as a Latent Image project. It got into a big stock hassle and things like that, so we chose the path of least resistance and that was to set up a separate corporation and then sell shares in the corporation. Latent Image, as a corporation, owns no stock in Image Ten Corporation.

RUSSO: The primary reason was that we could go to investors and say, OK, you're going to put your dollars into this picture and whatever money the picture makes, you'll be paid accordingly, rather than investors thinking their dollars would go back into the coffers of Latent Image or into the production of another film. So we set up Image Ten to do one picture and one picture only, and made an agreement with the stockholders that every dime would be shared.

CFQ: In what ways was the final NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD different than what you had originally planned, if it was at all?

RUSSO: I don't think it was.

STREINER: Well, let's face it. We're dealing with a fantasy premise, but deep down inside we were all serious filmmakers and somewhat disappointed because we had to resort to horror for our first film. I mean everyone would like to do the great American film, but we found ourselves, through a series of what we thought were logical conclusions, making a horror film. Once we adopted that for openers, we then tried to make the best, most realistic horror film that we could make on the money we had available. In all aspects of the production we treated it as a serious

*Unnamed members of Image Ten include Gary Streiner, a brother of the producer who worked sound on the film, Vince Survinski, the production manager at The Latent Image, and attorney Dave Clipper, who set up the corporation with investments, all small, from a total of thirty-three individuals.

film, although sometimes it's hard to treat that kind of premise seriously. I think that overriding viewpoint is displayed in the final product. Once you buy the fact that the dead can come back to life, it's treated in all other regards as a serious film.

CFQ: In the beginning, did you decide that this phenomenon of the dead coming back to life should happen over a wide geographical area, or be confined to a small setting for budgetary reasons?

RUSSO: We knew from the jump that it should be over a wide area. The only question was how could we deal with that in light of our limited budget. Could we actually create the feeling of the phenomenon being spread over a wide area? Karl, Russ, George and I would sit around and discuss how we could handle it. Could you deal with a small group of people confined in a house and still create the impression that the world was falling apart around them? We decided that was the route we had to go and I think we succeeded largely with that effort.

CFQ: Your use of the television was very good in that respect.

HARDMAN: Yes. The premise, of course, was the Venus probe being sent out and on return, picking up some stray radiation. The radiation was detected and the probe exploded, with chunks falling into the earth's atmosphere. That, naturally, would spread it over a fairly large piece of real estate.

STREINER: There was some discussion as to whether the phenomenon needed to be explored that deeply. Did we even have to reveal how the phenomenon came to be? There was some discussion about that, and then we settled for the compromise—the old radiation trick.

CFQ: Don't you think it would have been interesting if no possible explanation were given?

RUSSO: I think all of us would have preferred it that way. But, at the time almost every film we went to see in that genre had an explanation. It seemed that the masses couldn't live without some sort of explanation. We finally decided to give them one, even though we would have rather had various explanations attempted on the television, on the radio, by scientists, maybe religious fanatics, or whatever. Everyone with their own explanation and none really the explicit one.

HARDMAN: It was safer to explain it. That was the only conclusion.

CFQ: George Romero has called his original story for the film an "allegory." Basically, we've answered that the elements of the original story were in the completed film. Do you agree with him? Is NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD an allegory?

RUSSO: I don't agree with him.

HARDMAN: I don't either.

STREINER: No, I don't.

RUSSO: I think the film is an attempt to make money. And it's an attempt to tell a good, honest, emotionally involving story. A lot of the critics have jumped off the deep end in likening the ghouls to the silent majority and finding all sorts of implications that none of us ever intended. I think George wants to encourage that kind of thinking on the part of some critics. But I'd rather tell them they're full of shit.

HARDMAN: Jack is right. That's true.

STREINER: I think that in setting out to make a general entertainment film, if some critics were entertained to the point that they began reading all these fantastic social implications into it, fine, if that's how they're entertained. But I can't say that there were any overriding social ramifications in the original design of the film. I mean that is just not true.

RUSSO: We tried to stay true to the premise and we'd sit here and reject things. I think we tried to make the people behave the way normal people would behave. And the limitations of the film, as far as I'm concerned, stem mostly from the lack of budget. The shortcomings are just having to use music out of the library, having to go with takes because you couldn't shoot a lot of film. We shot that picture in 30 days and they were real back-breaking days. Twenty-hour days. Some of us slept at the house where we were shooting. There wasn't running water. We had to carry water from a spring. Remember how we used to carry garbage cans full of water at a

time? Even to flush the toilets. I mean it was really hard work to shoot that film. Karl and Marilyn did the make-up. We all built props. We made dummies that had to take gunshots.

RUSSO: Friends would come out and cook for the crew and for a lot of the extras that had to show up. And still we did it in 30 days. All the shooting.

STREINER: In all honesty, I would have to say that with as many of the production's shortcomings as we can attribute to budget, and there were a lot of those, you have to remember that it's the first feature we had ever completed. We would be kidding ourselves to say that we even now know all the answers about how to make any film. I mean we're still in the learning process. We had normal production headaches that we had experience at before. We learned an awful lot from the whole experience, down through the distribution arrangement. There are a lot of things that we would now never consider doing on another picture, either in terms of the production schedule or the distribution agreement. A lot of values have changed in the passing of six years.

CFQ: So, not to drag this out or press the point, I take it you don't believe a film could gain any kind of symbolic character on an unconscious, accidental level?

RUSSO: I think that could happen.

STREINER: It could happen but it didn't happen with this film. It's very hard to determine. Fellini and Bergman and people like that certainly start out with a certain design in their minds, but by the time their fans and critics get finished with their films, I'm sure a lot more is built in by the word of the critic and the word of the fan than Fellini or Bergman had in mind for a lot of their efforts.

RUSSO: Critics found all sorts of hidden meanings in STRAW DOGS. I read an interview with Sam Peckinpah where he said that he was handed a bad novel and he was handed a screenwriter. The only thing he could find good in the novel was the action in the siege at the end. So he decided to keep that and make the most he could out of it, and do a good action story. So Peckinpah's attitude about the film was vastly different from that of the critics.

CFQ: When you sit down and say, "Let's make a horror film," the first thing that comes to mind is let's scare people. What you have first is a series of incidents that are going to do just that. Did you then build your story around them?

HARDMAN: I think the main things we relied on were the ghouls and their attack, the siege of the house. As the film progressed in production, we decided as a group that we needed more than that, hence, The Last Supper, the explosion of the truck. I think these were afterthoughts.

RUSSO: Yes.

HARDMAN: Those individual incidents, involving the ghouls were written in after production had started on the film.

CFQ: Were the ghouls in the original concept? Were the living dead intended to eat human flesh?

STREINER: They were ghouls. The original title was THE FLESH EATERS. Insofar as the gore is concerned, I can recall at the time there seemed to be a very heavy influx of so-called horror films...

HARDMAN: That was the time of BLOOD FEAST.

STREINER: ...that were made in Mexico, and other foreign countries. They were just abominable. They were just terrible films in every sense of the word. They had no terror value, and almost no value, period. We decided that once we reconciled ourselves to that premise then why sell it out? If we presume that recently dead were coming back to life, would maim and otherwise devour victims, then let's show it. I think in that sense, that's the reason the film caught on so well. It didn't sell out. A lot of people got sick, but when girls went to the drive-ins with their boyfriends, they ended up hiding their faces a lot. I think it has a value. In that context, in that film, I think it worked.

RUSSO: We did a lot of talking about how to pay off the kind of people that like horror films. What do they like to see? There were a lot of movies out, for instance, that would spend 15 minutes talking about a gigantic flying mantis that was killing people. In the first 15 minutes of the

movie people would be driving around in cars and every once in a while you'd catch a glimpse of the monster behind a bush. Finally someone would get killed. Then another 15 minutes of a scientist in a laboratory trying to figure out what caused this gigantic thing. Then, at the end, the National Guard would come in and throw the flames on it and burn it. Our movie was not going to be like this. Whatever the terror is in the film, we said, there's going to be plenty of it. If it's a ghoul, then you'll have plenty of ghouls and there's going to be real danger.

HARDMAN: I think one of the reasons, luckily for us, that the thing went that way was because we couldn't fabricate sets. We couldn't build a monster. These things were not available to us. We just couldn't do it. We had to do it with human beings.

RUSSO: Rex Reed, for example, said that one of the qualities that has made *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD* a genuinely terrifying film is that it deals with ordinary people in a terrifying situation. Whereas, *THE MEPHISTO WALTZ*, for example, deals with people who have supernatural powers. They're witches and they go around killing each other. But the ordinary person doesn't think of himself as Count Dracula wearing a tuxedo and growing fangs at night.

STREINER: Getting back to the question you asked earlier about allegory in the film. A lot of people have read in some meaning to the casting of Duane Jones, a Negro, playing the male lead in the film. The simple truth of the matter is that he just turned out to be the best person for the part. He would have gotten the part if he were an Oriental or an American Indian or an Eskimo.

HARDMAN: But people don't believe that.

RUSSO: There's no social comment. It was not "let's give this black guy a break" or anything else. He just happened to turn up and be the best actor we could cast for the part. The decision was no more complex than that.

CFQ: The casting of Jones, and the ending, which is so defeating in a sense, are probably the reasons the film has caught on. You can't deny the reaction whether accidental or not.

RUSSO: You know, I was reading through the script the other day and I was very much surprised. I had totally forgotten the first ending that was written. The ending was written two different ways. We decided after the fact to kill everybody off. The first ending had Duane and Barbara both make it to the cellar. She wasn't killed by her brother. Remember? Russ drags her outside. That doesn't happen. She and Duane both make it to the cellar and they're the last two survivors. Then the posse comes and, of course, she's totally out of her head. Duane comes up out of the cellar and gets it right between the eyes. He falls dead. The posse moves into the house checking things out and the sheriff and his deputy go down into the cellar. They see the girl. The sheriff cocks his pistol. And he sees a tear. They bring her out of the cellar and in the last scene the sheriff's putting her coat around her as the bonfire is being lit. At least she's safe, but at that point she is almost insane.

CFQ: I take it you didn't like that ending?

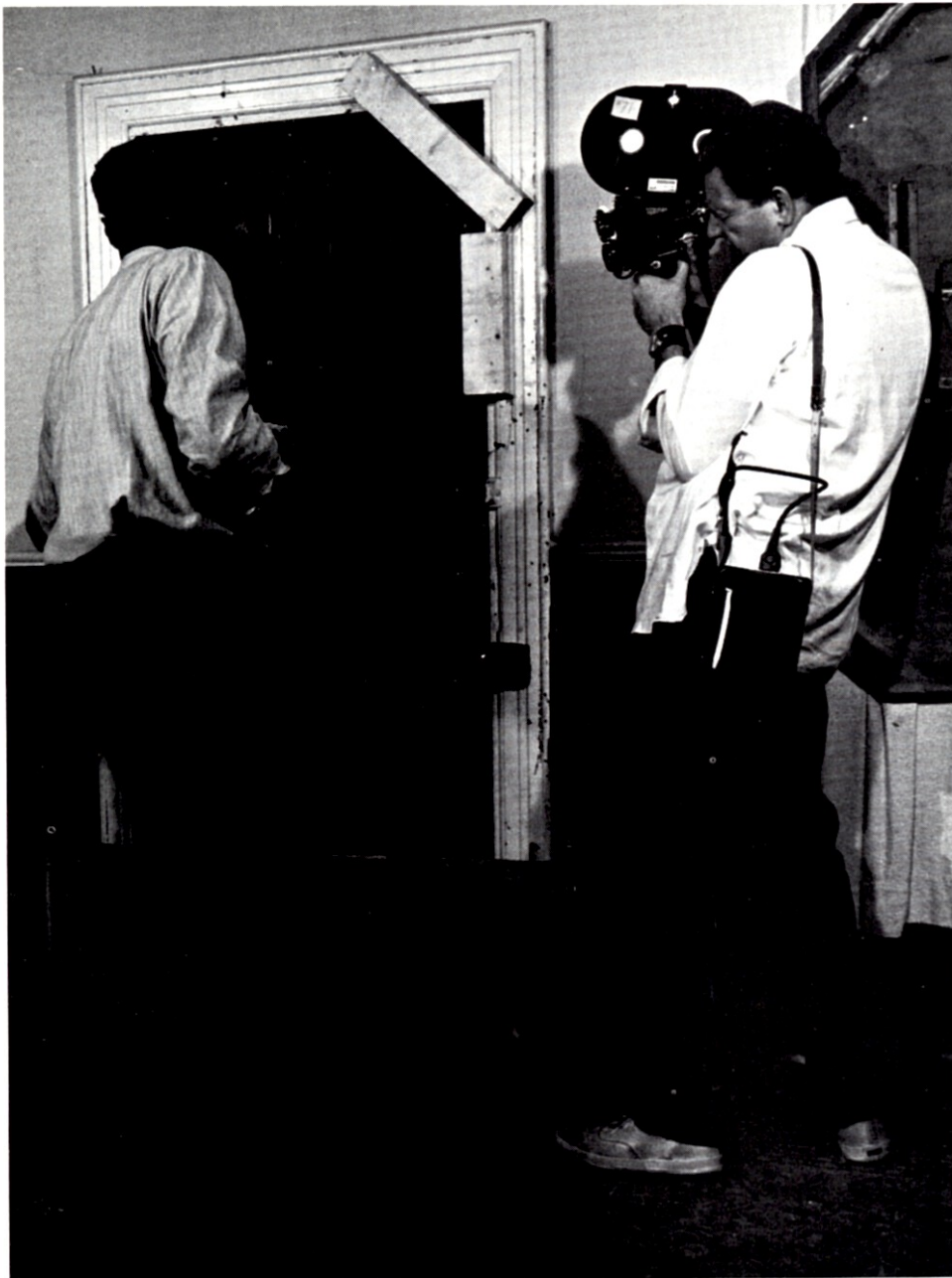
RUSSO: There's still something I like about it, but we all decided that the other ending would be better.

HARDMAN: It's kind of a fake ending. It's a little pat. I had a third ending. Remember that? I

*Actually, casting for the role of Ben had been narrowed down to Duane Jones and Rudy Ricci, a cousin to George Romero. A videotape test of each was made and everyone, including Ricci, voted for Duane.

Black actor Duane Jones is the real star of *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD*. Top: Jones immobilizes one of the ghouls with a crowbar. Middle: Inside the farmhouse he discovers Judith O'Dea in shock and attempts to make her comfortable. Bottom: Jones slugs Harry Cooper (played by producer Karl Hardman) for cowardice which nearly cost him his life. The fact that the dynamic hero of the film is played by a black actor gives *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD* definite racial connotations, despite the fact that the producers may avow that none is intended.





wanted to have everything wrapped up. Duane shot. All the ghouls wiped out. And then I wanted to have the little girl ghoul step into the frame as the posse drives away in the distance, watching the posse disappear. To have one ghoul left.

RUSSO: Most people like the uncompromising ending. They say they don't like it, but it creates what we wanted to create. They're just totally wiped out by the whole thing.

STREINER: You see, we could kick the ending of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD back and forth, and we could kick the gore back and forth, but somehow all of those ingredients went into—and I don't think I'm being a braggard about it—creating a memorable film. It certainly ranks with the films that are going to be around for a while. So we obviously did something right, even though we could probably nitpick and second-guess a lot of the specifics about the film.

CFQ: You mentioned that the original title of the film was THE FLESH EATERS, what were some of the other titles considered?

RUSSO: I always wanted to call it SOUTH PACIFIC.

HARDMAN: NIGHT OF ANUBIS was considered for a long time.

RUSSO: That was on the first print, Anubis being the Egyptian god of the dead.

HARDMAN: But Anubis was obscure.

STREINER: Yes, a little too esoteric for the film.

CFQ: How many years has it been playing in midnight showings in what cities?

STREINER: Well, that's happened in Boston, New York and Philadelphia.

HARDMAN: Two years straight in Minneapolis.

STREINER: It's also interesting that NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD has not been out of distribution for the six-year distribution life it's had. It has been exhibited somewhere. That's why it doesn't have a rating. It's peculiar in that sense and probably a fluke. I don't think that has happened to any other film.

CFQ: When you have the chance, do any of you sneak into the back of a theatre where the film is playing?

STREINER: I used to do that. As a matter of fact, the opening night of the film, the night after the premiere, I went by myself to an all-black theatre. It was one of the 13 or 17 situations the film opened in, and it was a predominantly black theatre in a black neighborhood. That's an experience in itself, to go watch a picture with a predominantly black audience. It's amazing how much blacks are entertained by that picture. I've never seen anything quite like it in terms of audience involvement. People were standing on their feet and shouting instructions to the characters. It's really an interesting experience.

CFQ: What was the reaction of the black audience to the end of the film. Was the audience taken aback by this?

STREINER: Oh yes, and also very angry about it. You could hear murmurings of, "Well, you know, they had to kill him off" and "Whitey had to get him anyway." "He bought it from the Man." Maybe the whole feeling would be different if, for instance, Superman had been black. I think the black community is looking for a latter day Superman. They found him in SHAFT and they find him in Ben and any number of places. But it's really kind of gratifying to know that something you've had a hand in making has some impact on people. Especially when you've come from a background of making TV commercials which are probably the most boring things—if you ever want to spend a boring lifetime, make television commercials. It's really a rewarding experience to



Left: George A. Romero films a tense moment (top) as Duane Jones stands poised before the farmhouse door while throngs of ghouls mill about outside (bottom), seeking entrance. Romero not only directed, but photographed and edited the film as well. Shortly after NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD was completed, a rift developed between Romero and the other principals, caused to some extent by the fact that the public and mass media credited the success of the film to Romero alone without acknowledging the vital contributions of others involved.

listen to a black crowd because they're not inhibited in any way and they want their man to win.

CFQ: Both of you, Russ and Karl, played various roles in the making of the film. Both of you acted in the picture: Karl playing Harry Cooper and Russ playing Johnny, the girl's brother. Did you find any problems in terms of acting conflicting with your behind-the-scenes work?

STREINER: Well, in my case, you noticed I was killed off in the first five minutes. I think that had to say something about my performance. I was uptight about it. You can stroll around behind the camera and you have an ability to tell people how you want to see something, but when you're on the receiving end, as far as I'm concerned, it's a totally different matter. I'm nervous about this interview. I'm getting a little bit of mike fright right now, as a matter of fact.

CFQ: Karl, you were prominent in the film, did you have any problems?

HARDMAN: Yes I did, as a matter of fact. Duane Jones, in my personal view and only my personal view, was underplaying far, far too much. He was too far down. His performance was monotonous, without color, without inflection. And that worried me because I thought there had to be some color, some inflection in the film. I guess we talked about that generally and some agreed, others didn't. But I decided that my character should be a sharp contrast with Duane's character. So I played Harry Cooper in a kind of frenzied, fist-clenching, nervous way. And when the first rushes finally came back and I saw myself on the screen it was really embarrassing because, to me, Harry Cooper came off like a comic opera figure.

STREINER: Well, didn't you move to Buenos Aires for a while after that?

HARDMAN: Yes. I felt I had to get out of town.

RUSSO: But I have to say that you constantly, throughout, asked for directional advice about how you were playing the character. You were always told that it was working well and you had no reason to modify your performance during the filming. So I'm just saying that I don't think it was your fault. That happened, and you may be partially right, if there were a middle ground that Duane could have been brought up to the contrast might have been eased.

I was in the film and I had some problems that neither Karl nor Russ had. One of them was getting set on fire with gasoline. Bill Hindsman and I did the scene where people were set on fire with Molotov cocktails and torches. I didn't have a beard then but I was the ghoul that got it in the head with the tire iron. Remember that? And the only reason for it was that we shot it at 4 o'clock in the morning and everybody had to go home. The crew stayed, at least, and they said that I would do the thing. Karl did the makeup. We used Derma wax. That's what morticians use if you get a nose taken off in a car accident. They make you a new nose with Derma wax. And that damn stuff is really something. The only way you can get it off is to use a knife and scrape it off your face. It takes a couple of hours and it pulls and feels like all of your skin is coming off.

STREINER: As a matter of fact, if you're interested, Jack can pop his nose off for you right now.

CFQ: Something I don't think was fully explained in the film was the body that was found upstairs in the house at the beginning. The people in the audience kept murmuring, "They're forgetting about the one upstairs." We're all waiting for it to come down, but it never does.

STREINER: Yes. The way that thing was done, the impression was to be that it was so far gone that there was almost nothing left but a skeleton. Probably if the thing had looked a little better, the thing we were using as the carcass, the audience would have understood. If we would only have had enough money to spend on it to allow the camera to dwell on it a little longer. It was one of those Revell plastic, snap-together heads, with fake hair and blood and clay molded around like skin.

CFQ: The scene that impressed me most in the entire film was the opening scene, with the car driving along the road.

HARDMAN: The car? The distant shot of the car?

CFQ: Yes, it was just so...

HARDMAN: It's ominous.

CFQ: Right away you said to yourself that something was wrong all around. It was just so well done.

RUSSO: And that was one of the last scenes shot, if not the last. It was already getting into November and there was an ice cold drizzling rain. We had to shoot between times that it would rain. And then the people's breath was a problem. You could see their breath and it had to match the other footage. The foliage was gone from the trees and we had to try to get around that.

STREINER: One of the things I'm still most angry about is the original negative, the black and white negative. The prints that were struck off of that, like our first answer print, were just beautiful. It was good-looking black and white film. When the deal was finally concluded with Walter Reade, although we didn't have it in writing, they orally agreed that the eventual prints would be pulled on Eastman stock and they would be good-looking prints. Well, the print they sent in—the first time we saw it was at the premiere and it was one of the most embarrassing situations. I hope to never go through that again. There was just so much detail in the original black and white that was just completely ignored. The Reade Organization figured why give it any consideration at all? It would have cost maybe three cents a foot more to have it pulled on Eastman Kodak stock.

RUSSO: Because the film was made in Pittsburgh, we suffer some condescension from people in the industry and people in other parts of the country. One reviewer said it was a grainy little product from Pittsburgh. Well, the print and negative we had looked as good as any black and white film. I don't care what black and white film you've ever seen, that print looked as good as any. I was talking to a friend who saw the film in Seattle a couple weeks ago and he saw a print where two twenty-minute sections of the film were brown. That's the way the one at the premiere was. That's no fault of ours. That's purely a lab problem, yet something we get blamed for. It causes people to think, "Well, they just can't make it in Pittsburgh like they can make it in Hollywood." It's totally false.

CFQ: How did you approach the distributors with this film?

RUSSO: Russ and George went to New York.

STREINER: With a great deal of trepidation. We finished the picture and George and I were driving to New York on the night Martin Luther King was assassinated. And we figured oh, great, everything else has gone wrong up to this point and here we show up with a film with a black cat playing the lead and probably every theatre in the country is going to be burned down within two days. We were not successful on our first attempt with the picture. Columbia Pictures had it for quite some time.

CFQ: Were they the first ones?

STREINER: They were the first ones to see the picture. In any event, Columbia had the picture tied up for some time, all the time giving us encouraging words like, "Yes, we like the picture," and "It's just going through another battery of screenings" and things like that. I came back to Pittsburgh and George stayed there for a couple of days. But we were satisfied that the picture was going to Columbia. Then George called us a few days later and said that Columbia eventually turned it down. At that point we started looking around for a producer's representative. We figured our inexperience apparently must have been showing through to these people. So we needed and secured a producer's rep. After the rep picked up the picture we had five offers that were almost identical over the next two months or so. We finally went with Walter Reade which has turned out to be the biggest mistake we made with the picture.

CFQ: What kind of deal does an independent producer get with a major distributor?

STREINER: If we had been played fairly with, we wouldn't have made out all that badly. We had a 50/50 deal. The prints and advertising came off the top and then everything after that was to be split 50/50. And we have strong suspicions, and it's my personal opinion, that we have not gotten a fair account from Reade. And on that basis we have now filed litigation. Litigation has already

begun against the Reade Organization for both the rights to the picture and for in excess of a million dollars in damages.

CFQ: Is this being filed jointly?

STREINER: It's being filed by Image Ten Corporation. * Karl, Jack, George, one other stockholder and myself are at this point trustees of the corporation. It's a five man committee appointed to be trustees for Image Ten and to look after its asset, which is NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD.

CFQ: You have nothing more to say on this?

RUSSO: I'm not sure how much we can say without getting into a possible slander or libel thing. Maybe we should let all that stuff be said in court. I'm just not sure.

STREINER: Well, I don't think we have to reserve too many comments. Anything I would tell you is my personal opinion. But I will most strenuously use my personal opinion to influence the judgement of the stockholders. Very frankly, I think we are now being screwed by Reade and we have been screwed by Reade. It's my intention to see that it doesn't go on. We're very serious about getting the rights to the picture back. We feel that there's a lot of life left in it and we just simply have not gotten a fair count on the thing.

CFQ: Are you ever contacted when the film is about to be released?

STREINER: No. We always learn after the fact.

HARDMAN: Reports from Reade are supposed to be sent in indicating where and when the picture has played. It's always after the fact, that's true. Never before, because they have the right to distribute the film wherever they deem fit.

CFQ: Initially, were you satisfied with the way the film was being distributed?

RUSSO: It only took us about three or four months to begin to get dissatisfied, not so much with the way it was being distributed at first, but with the way the returns were coming to us. The first week the picture was released showed us that it was going to be a hit. It made a lot of money in Pittsburgh and in New York and Philadelphia in the opening bookings. We had projections from the distributor and from the producer's representative, and even from the owners of theatre chains, that we would make at least a million dollars on the picture. We feel we should have made, actually, more than that. Closer to two million dollars and that's one of the reasons for the lawsuit.

STREINER: The picture had been in distribution for about four months and on the strength of the four months play-off we received a letter of estimate from our producer's representative that went into some detail describing to us how, by the end of 1969, from just the United States and Canada, we would have accrued a quarter of a million dollars. We haven't hit that figure yet! The picture has now played in over 4000 engagements that we know of in the United States and Canada.

RUSSO: It played for a year in Rome in one of the largest theatres and it's played for almost a year in Madrid. It's been dubbed into approximately 25 foreign languages.

HARDMAN: It's played in Paris.

CFQ: While actually filming did you do anything to attract distributors?

STREINER: The only thing we did during production was to round up an awful lot of production shots and we did put together a press kit of sorts, or a publicity kit with a dozen photographs and a few other things and sent it around to various distributors while the picture was being edited. It got very little response.

RUSSO: We had coverage during production from a local television station and we did have one *Variety* article. There were some scattered newspaper articles.

STREINER: But there was no thrust. We didn't target in on any distributors.

*The suit Image Ten filed against Walter Reade will go to trial sometime during the first six months of 1975. A judge has been appointed. A long battle ensued over jurisdiction in the case when Image Ten insisted that it be tried in Pennsylvania. Reade insisted it be tried in New York. The dispute went all the way to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court who ruled that jurisdiction for the case belongs in Pennsylvania. The case will be tried in Common Pleas Court in Allegheny County.

NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD

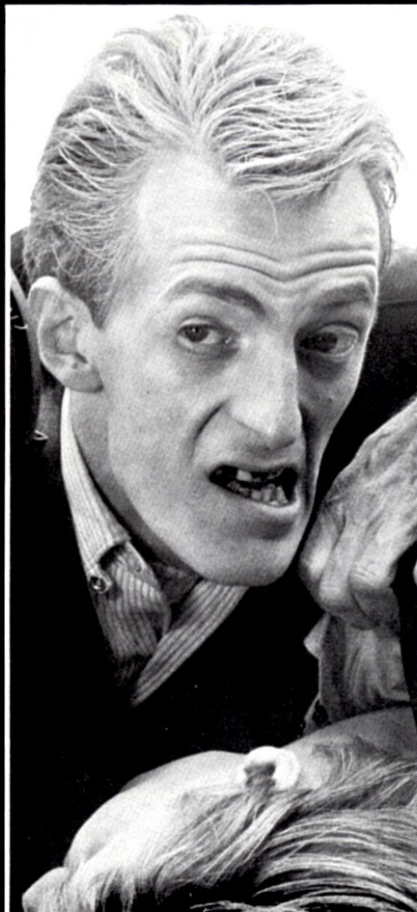
... a horror film without hope, a bleak, relentless nightmare of our fears about facing death...

NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD Released by Continental (The Walter Reade Organization). 1968. In Black & White. 90 minutes. An Image Ten Production. Produced by Russell Streiner and Karl Hardman. Directed, photographed and edited by George A. Romero. Screenplay by John A. Russo. Production director, Vincent D. Survinski. Lighting supervisor, Joseph Unitas. Production manager, George Kosana. Sound engineer, Gary Streiner. Special effects, Regis Survinski and Tony Pantanello. Script coordinator and continuity, Jacqueline Streiner and Betty Ellen Haughey. Hair styles, Bruce Capristo. Title sequence by The Animators.

Barbara Judith O'Dea
 Johnny Russell Streiner
 Ben Duane Jones
 Harry Karl Hardman
 Tom Keith Wayne
 Judy Judith Ridley
 Helen Marilyn Eastman
 Karen Kyra Schon

There appear to be some broad basic differences between science fiction and horror films. In general, the most durable science fiction films deal with our fear of being absorbed or lost, with our fear of losing personal identity. The loss may be in the vastness of space (2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY) and deal with our fear of the unknown and infinite. The loss may, however, reflect our fear of losing our individual identity in an ever more complex world which calls for or seems to call for increasing conformity (INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS). In general, the most durable horror films can be seen as a means of coming to terms with mortality, dealing in some way with our fear of death (THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI).

An appreciation by
 Stuart M. Kaminsky



There are subcategories and sidepaths such as the gore films (BLOOD FEAST) and popular films which encompass elements of both horror and science fiction (THE THING), but I think the difference I have indicated between the two kinds of films is basically true.

NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD is one of those films combining the science fiction theme of loss of identity with the horror fear of death, a fear manifested in the appearance of a creature which is usually grotesque, immortal and powerful, but tormented or evil, and carried to a conclusion especially jarring and possibly especially appropriate for a contemporary audience. **NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD**—very much like **THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI**—is a horror film without hope, a film about facing death which gives us no reassurance. There is no saving of mankind at the end; no child to carry on for civilization, not even an immortal monster to be resurrected. Death in **NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD** is meaningless, total, inevitable. The dead come for the living who know eventually they must become one of the dead, that all they can do is try to exist as long as possible with some dignity. Most of the characters in the film fail totally to even die in dignity. Ben, clearly the hero, not just the protagonist, dies most ironically, destroyed by a civilization of the living, which includes the bizarre, unfeeling, comic sheriff; the distant, smug Washington officials; the frighteningly cold McLuhanesque television commentators and newsmen. Those destroyed in the small isolated home represent the last vestiges of affirmative American values. Those who live after the film are a kind of dead living. The hopeless dilemma is complete. The monsters who live are not very much different from those destroyed. Romero's film is a bleak, relentless nightmare of our fears in which nothing can save us, in which we are trapped between the horror of death and life. That the film should have such broad appeal is a tribute to its skillful execution, but it also may mean that the very act of recognizing the hopelessness makes us better able to face its implications. Sitting through **NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD** is like an intensive session with a good psychiatrist. You come to grips with things you would often rather not face, but having faced them is, somehow, to lessen their ultimate horror.

The crudity of the film, the pseudo-cinema verite use of the camera adds to the impression that what we are seeing is not solely fantasy, but a nightmare firmly fixed on reality. The setting itself, an isolated farmhouse of the most bleak mundane variety in western Pennsylvania, becomes a microcosmic reduction of middle America.

We are first introduced in the film to a couple, Barbara and Johnny, who appear almost soap opera middle-class. They are going to a cemetery to show their respect to a dead relative. Johnny is outwardly and overtly contemptuous of the need for the journey. The dead are dead and he thinks the whole trip is foolish. Barbara, his sister, reacts more conventionally, saying that there are certain actions which are proper although, clearly, she is uneasy about being in the cemetery and attaches a mystic-religious meaning to the visit. Johnny is the anti-religious, anti-mystic skeptic. Almost expectedly, Johnny is the first person we see fall victim of the living dead. A living-dead man approaches the couple. Johnny jokes with Barbara about the possibility of the man being dead and suddenly finds himself in a battle with the man. Johnny falls and hits his head. We find later Johnny is dead. As in some more traditional horror films, he has suffered the fate of those misguided scientific-continued page 23

RUSSO: Once the picture was being released all of us worked very hard on publicity. We did everything we could. All of the stockholders helped with putting up posters and talking to their friends and we were interviewed on quite a few radio and television shows.

CFQ: In respect to the Reade Organization, was there any agreement made for future films?

STREINER: No. At the time we were looking for money to do another picture and Walter Reade offered, and, in fact, got approved from the Bank of America, a letter of credit for some fifty thousand dollars. And after the letter of credit was issued they attempted to secure an agreement from us that other pictures we did could be distributed by Reade on the same terms as NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD. We were certain enough at the time that we were getting a shafting so we turned down the fifty thousand dollar letter of credit and the attached agreement. So there are no ties between Reade and any of the organizations we represent or any of us as individuals. If you get burned once you're very reluctant to stick your hand in the fire again.

CFQ: Let's discuss the first test screening of the film. What was the general reaction of the audience? Who was there?

HARDMAN: They were largely friends, I suppose, who had heard about the film or knew about it, but hadn't seen it. People who had been in it. Everyone was given cards asking for written opinions of the film. In fact, after a couple of those screenings, it was decided to eliminate a lot of the exposition, which is the slow part of the film. The Venus probe and what's going on in this part of the country and that part of the country were all radically reduced in length.

RUSSO: After we finished the film we went into a period of...

STREINER: ... deep depression.

RUSSO: I guess it was sort of an emotional let down. The film was in the can and all the really exhausting work was done. There were two or three months of really hard work in pre-production, and then thirty days of really grinding shooting. Then the footage had to come back from the lab and we had to put the sound together with the work prints so we could look at the takes. Everybody lost enthusiasm and nobody knew what we really had in the can anymore. Excitement picked up about two or three months later when we had the takes synchronized and we could look at them. Then we started to get the suspicion that we had turned out something pretty good. I remember when the first edit was finished. That's when we really started to get excited. We had seen little bits and pieces of the first edit, but when we saw a relatively complete edit it just smacked us in the eyes. Karl jumped up and said, "Goddamnit! We've got it! We have a movie!" We knew then that it was a good horror film. All of us felt that way. And we knew it was capable of making some kind of splash, at least with horror film fans. We weren't real surprised when it started to be successful at the box-office. We were more happy than surprised, I think.

HARDMAN: When you make a film, even though you go into it with the intellectual point of view that you may bomb out, and you're completely willing to bomb out and what right do you have to hit with this when there are so many films being made by so many important people that don't make it, you still think that it's got to go. It's going to be good enough. It'll sell. People will dig it. So, it's that really "on top" feeling.

CFQ: You were, I would imagine, somewhat surprised at the critical response to the film?

RUSSO: Yes, we were surprised at the critical response, like the ones that liken the ghouls to



Right: The ghouls of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD. The living dead are ordinary people who have been "activated" by man caused interference with outer space. When the ghouls march on the beleaguered farmhouse, we see it as a horrible attack by the ordinary, the people who have no identity, the kinds of people we deal with all the time but never get to know. The ghouls were played mostly by residents of Pittsburgh who were friends or ad agency clients of the producers. Opposite page. A ghoul attacks and kills Johnny, played by producer Russell Streiner.



the silent majority and find all kinds of political implications.

HARDMAN: Everyone knows about the film. The longer this film stays in distribution and the more I hear about this cult and that cult, the more astounded I become that we made this film. I'm delighted, I might add.

STREINER: I think, probably, the source of a great deal of amazement to us was when it started to take off the way it did. However, we were more surprised that the Walter Reade Organization never, not even today, never really came around. They just sort of stood around and said, "Wow! We can't figure out why we're getting all these bookings." You don't figure it out, just do something to embellish it, which they have failed to do. And that part of it has always confused me. This was the first film of its kind the Reade Organization took on. They dealt with films like *DAVID AND LISA* and some of the old, really good British comedies and things like that. So it was a departure for them, in a certain sense. I don't think they really knew how to cope with what happened to it. If they had a roaring success with a Peter Sellers film they'd know how to handle that and how to milk all the playdates they could out of it, getting the percentage up and things like that. I think they always were, and still are a little afraid to go to an exhibitor and say, "Look, this picture is doing a ton of business. Here are the terms that we want." I just don't think that ever happened with them.

RUSO: These kinds of arguments, I think, might be better if we didn't print them.

CFQ: Why?

RUSO: Because you're saying, in effect, one of Reade's defenses is probably going to be that they didn't know how to handle the picture and they're going to say we got the best deals possible. They're going to talk about their hundred-dollar deals and what you just said corroborates that. They could plead ignorance and say, "The picture got a lot of playdates, but we had to take a hundred dollars a booking."

STREINER: Regardless of anything else they are, in fact, in material breach of contract. There is no question about that. They had twenty days to respond to alleged breaches of contract. They failed to respond and on that basis Image Ten considers the rights of the picture are now, once again, ours. We have been prevented by the Reade Organization from taking possession of our property. That's the first cause of action in the law suit.

RUSO: But as far as the money is concerned, if it's true that they don't realize the worth of the picture and aren't pushing it as hard as they should, that would indicate to anyone that perhaps that's why the picture hasn't made money for us.

STREINER: I'm really not concerned. I'm not as apprehensive as you are.

CFQ: What would you do if you got the rights back?

HARDMAN: I'd opt to shelve it for a while, then rerelease it.

STREINER: That's one of the things we were considering. We're also considering when the rights come back to us, releasing it on a first-run basis. It wasn't eligible for that the first time out, but I think because of its proven success, someone might be inclined to book it into first-run houses.

CFQ: Would you consider this film, because of the response it's getting, somewhat of an "art" film?

HARDMAN: Art film? No.

STREINER: No. I wouldn't consider it that way. I think it's a flat-out entertainment picture and people who enjoy films will continue to be en-

Left: Special effects man Tony Pantanello (top) applies blood squibs to a ghoulish extra that will be shot by the posse at the end of the film, as it scours the countryside, carrying guns and shooting anything that moves (bottom). Nearly everyone who worked on the film contributed to special effects in some way as the need arose. Opposite page. Top: Charles Craig as the frighteningly cold, McLuhanesque television commentator. Bottom: The bizarre, unfeeling, comic sheriff played by a local law enforcement official who improvised his lines.

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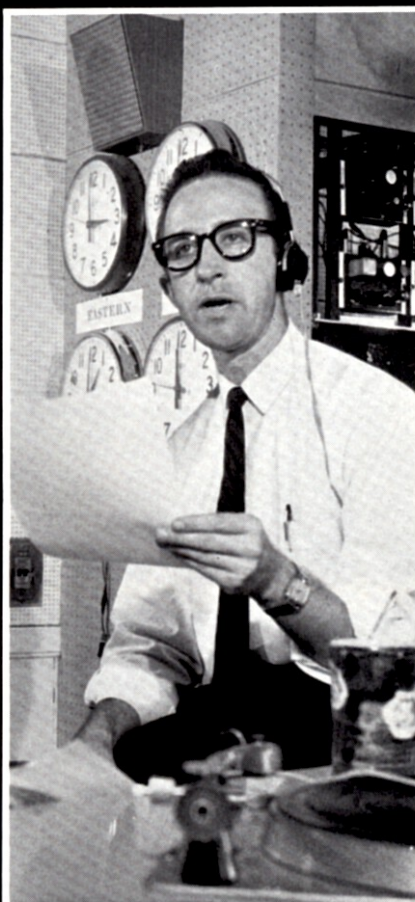
fic modernists who mock the unknown. Barbara, the innocent, survives, runs madly pursued by the living-dead man.

At this point, it is interesting to recall that the living-dead are ordinary dead people who have been "activated" by man-caused interference with outer space. The horror comes from above, heaven, apparently to punish mankind for violating the mystery of space, a motif extant in such diverse films as *INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS* and *2001*. The living dead are ordinary people of all ages and sizes, even the actors, as Romero points out, are Pennsylvania townspeople, not professional or even amateur actors. When they march on the house later in the film, we see it as a horrible attack by the ordinary, the people who have no identity, the kinds of people we deal with all the time and never get to know, the people we are part of but with whom we do not identify. The living dead are the masses; the living dead are brainless monsters without volition acting with a single impulse, to destroy, consume the living. The ironic dilemma is poignant; if one dies in the film, he becomes one of these horrible, mindless epitomizations of conformity, bent on consuming life. If he does not die "naturally" he is either consumed horribly by the living dead, destroyed by the conformity, or lives on in a mindless grey world not radically different from that of the living dead.

Getting back to the plot development, Barbara makes her way to a small farmhouse pursued by the living-dead man. In the house, she wanders from room to room and we wander with her. We have a comfortable perspective at this point. She is a nice looking girl; the film will carry through with her as she is threatened, and ultimately, she will be saved by a handsome young man or some force representing society or God. At least this is what our conventional responses prepare us for, but *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD* allows no conventional response. With the arrival of Ben, Barbara begins to sink into a state of shock, a semi-catatonia from which she never really recovers. Eventually, she is consumed by the living dead, but as a focal heroine, she is taken away from us quite early, shortly after Ben appears.

Ben, young, good looking, black, arrives, defeats several of the living dead and appears to be in control. Ben then becomes the focus of the film. He is hero in a very conventional sense. He is the person who knows what to do; acts as the leader. In spite of what George Romero has said about the film having nothing to do with Ben's being black, the fact that he is black does give us a different perspective on the film. Ben's description of his encounter with the living dead at the gas station is remarkably like the description of an escape from a lynching. Were he white, our minds might not have made the connection, but since he is black, it is difficult not to see it as such. Certainly, the end of the film with Ben's body being carried off for burning by the posse takes on connotations of lynching which are inescapable. It is also difficult to escape the observation that none of the living dead are black. On the contrary, the final attack by the dead on the house is very much like the final attack on the isolated house by the black soldiers in *BIRTH OF A NATION*, but *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD* reverses the situation. All the attackers are white. In any case, the hopes we have for humanity are concentrated in the black man.

Ben demonstrates that he is the person who can carry the fugitives in the house through the night if anyone can. This too, however, is radically undercut, not only by the fact that everyone is killed in spite of his



efforts, but by the fact that in terms of survival and the evidence of the film, Ben is proved wrong in his strategy, an unsettling conclusion as is much of the film. Ultimately, Ben is human, fallible. When we meet Harry and Helen, the quarrelling couple with the daughter, Karen, who has been bitten by the living dead, we are convinced that Harry in contrast to Ben is a coward, and being a coward must be wrong in his desire to want to blockade himself and the others in the basement. Harry is, indeed, less brave and less admirable than the others and Ben. It is Ben who convinces them all to make a stand on the first floor and fight it out. But Ben, the hero, is wrong. When he does, finally, find himself alone with everyone killed, Ben blockades himself in the basement (destroying Harry and his family who have become living dead in that basement, possibly reminding us that indeed Harry had advocated hiding in the basement). Ben survives the night. The living dead do not get in. Harry was right; Ben was wrong. The heroic idea of facing the enemy and defeating him is proved false and our hero, though we still admire him, is ironically destroyed by the "living" when he comes out of the basement. On a simple level, the others are the victims of the dead; Ben is a victim of the living.

Harry, Helen and Karen are a further example of the breakdown in convention which takes place in the film. That Harry should die is expected; that Helen should die is jarring; that Karen should die is unsettling, but that Karen should be the one to kill her parents and start to consume them is so upsetting visually, not to mention Freudianly, that it questions our acceptance of conventions about the sanctity and affirmation of the family. All foundations are being torn away.

Even the young couple, the all-American Tom and the very conventionally pretty Judy, are destroyed most horribly. They conform, agree with Ben, act bravely, and are destroyed. Nothing is left.

The coarse sheriff survives; the unfeeling television people survive; the Washington bureaucrats survive; and the family, the hero, American traditional values of individualism are destroyed.

Adding to the immediacy of these images is the increasing constriction of the film. The sequence in which Ben boards up the house is shown at length and we have a claustrophobic reaction. The world gradually closes in on us during the film. We move from the outdoors to the farmhouse. We soon leave the upper rooms. Then the world becomes a few rooms and finally one room with maddening contact to the outside world only through a television set on which people respond to the horror we witness as if it were an everyday event. A viewer might well equate this coolness of the medium to the living dead to the way in which television coverage of the Vietnam War (or any war) must look to a participant seeing it sandwiched between an ad for TWA and the weather.

Black and white is particularly appropriate in the film, because it both evokes the aura of cinema verite during the daylight scenes and reminds us of the horror of the Universal horror films of the 1930s and 1940s in the night scenes.

I find no humor in the film. That much of it is ironic is clear. If George Romero finds it funny (which I find very strange, but which I can accept), it may be the only way he can come to terms with the stark hopelessness and nightmare of the film. If it is comic it is hysterically comic, it calls for the embarrassed response of an audience when confronted with the suddenness of horror, the view of Norman Bates in his mother's clothes and a knife in his hand coming at us with nowhere for us to run.

tertained by it.

CFQ: Then it should be advertised as basically a splashy horror film?

HARDMAN: Yes. They're still going with the original FRANKENSTEIN and DRACULA.

STREINER: No. I don't think you can all of a sudden say that because a lot of people are interested in seeing this picture it is an art film, then revamp the advertising to a level of sophistication that will get a whole new audience. I really don't think you can do that.

CFQ: Some of the slick magazines and critics have almost called it that. I don't think NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD has a general appeal, and perhaps it could reach more people by making some changes in the outlook of the film.

STREINER: Those are really bridges we have to cross when we get to them. The first and important thing is to get the rights back. Then we'll have to sit down and have a couple of skull sessions as to what to do with it, whether we redistribute it ourselves or look for another distributor.

RUSSO: There are certain kinds of people who need intellectual pretensions before they'll go to see a skin flick. NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD has already played in the Museum of Modern Art. So maybe you are right. Maybe there are certain kinds of people who need intellectual pretensions before they'll go see a horror film, but once they get into the theatre they'll dig it.

HARDMAN: I think that's true of a minority of the people.

RUSSO: Maybe we should make some attempt to sucker the audience?

STREINER: I don't think anybody is really going to be suckered. It's a film that pays off most people. It has some value other than the blood and guts aspect.

RUSSO: I think it's a different thing, like I said, to sucker an audience. If you're going to use tricks to get people into a theatre, and once they're there they're going to like what they see, it's different than using tricks to get people into an audience to see something they're disappointed in. What I'm saying is that there might be a segment of the people that would love, really enjoy a horror film, but they've got themselves psyched out of those kinds of plots, and they need to first believe there's something more to it.

CFQ: What was the ratio of footage shot to footage used?

RUSSO: We shot 56,000 feet.

STREINER: We used 10,000. It would be safe to say 5.5 to 1. Somewhere in that area.

CFQ: Who was responsible for the editing?

RUSSO: George Romero.

STREINER: What we would do, as each scene was cut, was sit down and look at it. It's very hard to look at a film in that way. So the first impressions everyone had were pretty much created from the first rough cut of the film. Then there was a lot of discussion about what should go and what should stay. In that regard it was committee edited, but the mechanics were handled by Romero.

CFQ: Did you use stock music and who selected it?

HARDMAN: It was library music.

RUSSO: I think we all had a hand in selecting it. Karl even made some in his studio.

HARDMAN: A lot of the electronic stuff.

RUSSO: Karl and Marilyn recorded a lot of the sound effects and invented sound effects here and there that were slugged in when we needed them. There's a very practical reason for using music in place of sound effects. It's cheaper and easier. I think we would have preferred to use naturalistic sound effects throughout NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD. I think it would have been more frightening than to go with the music. But the music covers up sound effects. We would have had to record and sync all the footsteps and nail pounding in the film. It's just a much more laborious, expensive process.

CFQ: Was there any crisis before or during the making of the film?

RUSSO: I think we worked very well together once we started shooting. The only discomfort we had, really, was in getting organized. We had all worked together on commercials for a short stretch, but we had never worked on a project so large, that demanded so much in the way of lo-

gistics. We spent months making dummies and things, and scouting locations, and finding out just where everybody's head was.

STREINER: The only crisis was keeping the commode at the location working. That created some very tense, anxiety-filled moments. Other than that I shot Karl in the chest three or four times. My brother got his arm burned one night. He did it inadvertently when we were shooting one of the outdoor scenes—well, how can you catch your arm on fire other than inadvertently?

RUSSO: Like most other films, NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD wasn't shot in sequence. So, for some scenes the house would have to be totally boarded up. For other scenes that were supposed to be earlier in the film the house was in a different stage of being boarded up, and we had to remember all these different stages. When we'd unboard the house we took magic marker and wrote on the board "upper left—door," and on another board "lower left—door." We'd have to put these boards back in exactly the same place. In some takes, even now in the finished print, if you look closely, you see Duane boarding up and you can read "upper left—door" on the board.

HARDMAN: And then teaching Duane how to use a hammer, how to hold a hammer.

RUSSO: Duane wasn't much of a carpenter. We had to drill holes in the boards that Duane put the nails into.

CFQ: Why did you have to shoot it that way? Why not shoot all the boarded up scenes at once?

HARDMAN: It wasn't that well planned.

RUSSO: Well, some of the actors weren't available. We had to work around people's schedules, too. We couldn't afford to break down for five days and wait, so we'd go ahead and shoot something, then backtrack.

CFQ: Was your script completed when you began shooting?

STREINER: It was completed, other than the incidents Karl mentioned that were added after the fact. Once the shooting started to take some shape the script was embellished, but the basic script was finished when we started shooting.

CFQ: I read that the scene Karl so fondly refers to as "The Last Supper" was a spur of the moment addition. Didn't a butcher drive onto the set with all those intestines?

HARDMAN: Well, no. One of the stockholders owned a chain of meat markets. We knew that we needed intestines, livers, hearts, and stuff like that. So he arranged to get those things from the slaughter house from which he purchased meat. They were all goodies belonging to lambs which are supposedly somewhat similar to human organs. We had to slush out the intestines, literally. That was pretty grim.

RUSSO: That was comic when I first saw it. Vince Survinski was standing there with those intestines, washing them out with Coke bottles full of water. There wasn't very much that was funny during the filming, at least for me. It was all hard work.

HARDMAN: I'm still amazed that somebody during the filming didn't just collapse and die, right there on the spot.

CFQ: Why do you say that?

HARDMAN: Because of the hours.

RUSSO: It was really, really hard work.

STREINER: I don't think we'd go through the same kind of production schedule again. At four o'clock in the morning, after you've been working 18 hours, your objectivity gets a little on the cloudy side, and all you're interested in doing is sacking out someplace. You've been living on ham and cheese sandwiches and a couple beers for three days.

CFQ: You used local, non-professional people in this film for supporting roles and as the ghouls. What was the reaction when you walked up to somebody and told them, "What we want you to do is wear these torn clothes and munch on these animal intestines."

HARDMAN: Both Latent Image and Hardman Associates were working closely with all the advertising agencies in the city. The word was out that this picture was going to be made. We simply put out the word that we needed extras and everyone, almost without exception, was very eager to take part. Because of the glamour, the so-called glamour.

RUSSO: We used some of the townspeople

from Evans City.

CFQ: Were these people paid for what they did?

HARDMAN: Ultimately, everyone was paid.

STREINER: There was a fair amount of interest, too, in Evans City about the shooting itself. Like the night we blew up the truck. We had two identical trucks. One we rented up there. Didn't we buy the other one for around \$45?

HARDMAN: Yes, something like that?

STREINER: We towed it up there. On the night we blew up the truck we decided to wait until two o'clock in the morning because we weren't quite sure what was going to happen. Still, in all, there must have been 100 to 150 people who hung around. They wouldn't go home.

CFQ: Did anything happen that you didn't expect?

STREINER: No. It was just that everyone was so curious. I just mention the truck blowing up, but there were nights when people would hand around way into the morning hours just out of sheer curiosity.

RUSSO: Well, some shrapnel came pretty close to you and me.

HARDMAN: When you're dealing with pyrotechnics and say you're not quite sure as to what will happen, that sounds funny, but a hubcap could sail off and decapitate someone.

RUSSO: It was TNT and gasoline and we had never blown up a truck before.

STREINER: We now conduct lessons in it.

RUSSO: We weren't sure the fellow handling the demolitions wouldn't be overenthusiastic. We shot the scene with three cameras to be sure we had it. As it turned out we were able to get two takes. The TNT blew the truck off the ground a little bit and then flames burst out all over, but they died down quickly and we got another take.

CFQ: What was the hardest scene you had to shoot? Karl, I remember something about a coat tree that kept following you down the stairs?

HARDMAN: From my own personal point of view that was the hardest.

STREINER: Karl's famous death.

CFQ: Would you elaborate on that?

HARDMAN: Very simply, I was holding a rifle on Duane and saying we were going to do things my way. He turned and threw a board at me, knocking the rifle out of my hands. He grabbed the rifle, leveled it—whamm! Of course, as the character I saw what was coming. The force of the bullet was to slam me into the corner. I was to bounce off the corner, hit the piano on the other side of the doorway leading to the basement, then clutching myself, fall down the steps into the basement of the house. Well, there was a coat tree next to the door which had been in every shot and there were coats on it. Eleven times I got shot, slammed myself into the corner, bounced off onto the piano and got wrapped up in that coat tree, and the coat tree would follow me into the basement. By the time we got a good take I was so exhausted from laughing I hardly had enough energy left to do it.

STREINER: Probably the most difficult shooting was the day we photographed most of the posse, the helicopters and the police dogs. It was difficult just from a pure logistics point of view. We had an awful lot of people to handle. We also had to be very careful. One person was assigned to make sure all of the live ammunition was out of the weapons being used in the scene and replaced with blanks. We didn't want any mishaps, or anybody thinking they had an empty gun and, in fact, shooting someone. That was difficult, but only in the sense of the logistics.

CFQ: The Sheriff at the end of the film is extremely loose and humorous. Was it planned that way?

RUSSO: He had never acted before. I gave him all the facts about the ghouls and about the situation. I told him when he was being interviewed to keep this fund of information in his mind and answer the questions in his own words. So those were some of his own words. We decided to leave it in.

CFQ: It is very difficult to assign creative credit to a cooperative effort such as filmmaking. Who deserves the credit for whatever success NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD has achieved?

HARDMAN: In a singular or plural sense?

CFQ: Either way. If it's a singular sense, who

was it?

HARDMAN: Me.

RUSSO: I think that, like I said earlier, there's probably around ten people. Without any one of them the picture wouldn't have been made.

STREINER: It's hard to say where the success really lies. Is it in the original concept or is it in the collective attitude with which the project was approached? George Romero certainly deserves a lot of the credit. But I think it would be remiss to place all the credit at George's feet. I do think that it is impossible to single out any one person and say without his efforts this thing would not have been successful. It really didn't work that way. There was a core of maybe five or six people who were all ultimately responsible for the success of the film and I'm not trying to add or detract credit from any one person by saying that. But in my opinion, that's really the way it is.

RUSSO: I think the concept had a hell of a lot to do with it. As far as the concept is concerned, Russ, Karl, Marilyn, George and I worked it into what resulted in the final screenplay. And even then there were changes.

HARDMAN: I agree with what Russ has said. I think if I had to enumerate key people so far as the actual production itself, certainly George, Jack, Russ—I'm thinking of whole areas in which these people worked—myself, Marilyn and, I think Vince Survinski.

STREINER: Yes, very definitely.

HARDMAN: Vince did the majority of the construction.

STREINER: Vince is one of the guys who generally is always in the background and almost never gets any publicity. He's just as happy that way.

RUSSO: He works over at Latent Image. He made sure a lot of the special effects could happen. Demolitions and fire. Gunshot effects. Everything from set design to help with organizing things. He's just one of your invaluable people to have around the set.

CFQ: Do any of you have an inclination toward making horror films?

HARDMAN: I do. I think they're fun.

RUSSO: I remember a suggestion made by Karl and Marilyn. We were looking for a way to get rid of the ghouls. Like how do you kill them? Karl and Marilyn suggested that one of the people in the house should discover that the ghoul dies when you smack it in the face with a Boston cream pie. Then you'd have the people in the house waiting for salvation and at the last minute this big truck pulls up...

HARDMAN: A trailer truck. We envisioned a trailer truck.

RUSSO: We'd go out with a big pie throwing contest.

HARDMAN: I'd forgotten about that.

STREINER: I think there's a large enough audience for films like NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD. Any kind of film that you feel will entertain people, filmmakers should have an inclination toward, whether it's WHAT'S UP DOC? or Woody Allen. If people can be entertained by it then there's a value in making such a picture.

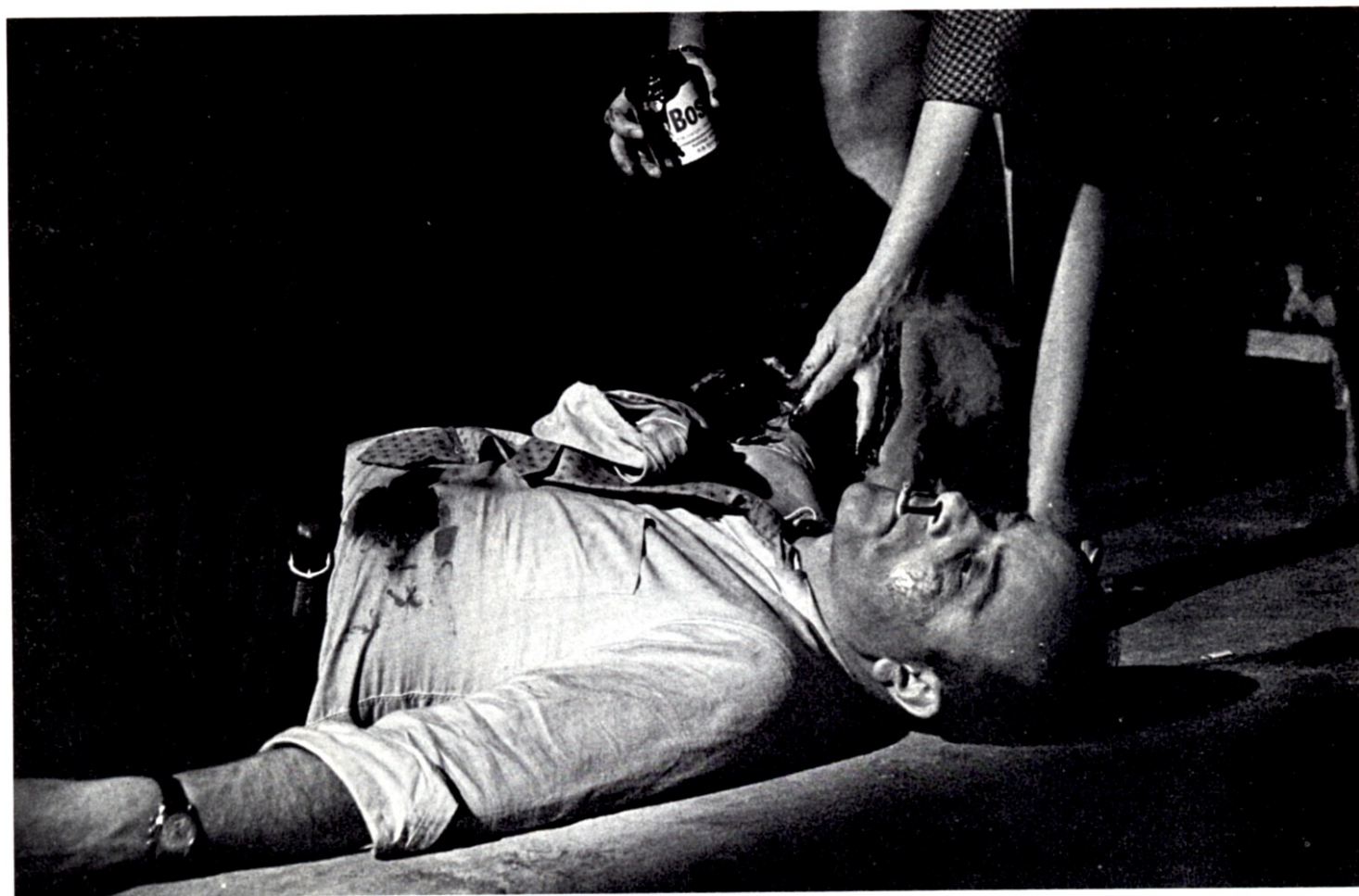
CFQ: There is much said about horror films giving people a release for their frustrations. Some have called them healthy outlets. Do any of you have any thoughts on this?

HARDMAN: I think if you say horror films, or films of that genre are healthy it's only because the people are entertained and it provides them release.

STREINER: There was a strong sentiment when NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD first came out. A lot of parent groups and people like that

Top: Producer Karl Hardman as Harry Cooper, a solid middle-class ultra-conservative who is looking out for number one. Not a professional actor. Hardman's nervous, frenzied, fist-clenching performance in the film adds immeasurably to its atmosphere of tension. Middle: Judith Ridley as Judy, one of the young lovers destroyed in a flaming truck while attempting to escape. After completion of the film she was married to producer Russell Streiner. Bottom: Marilyn Eastman as Helen worries about her daughter, Karen (Kyra Schon), who has been bitten by a ghoul.





thought that the people who made NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD must be next to savages, that no civilized person could bring himself to photograph cannibalism and that sort of thing. I never felt that I should be taken out of society.

CFQ: One of the reasons horror films are so popular is that people enjoy being frightened. Would you agree?

HARDMAN: Yes.

RUSSO: Most fairy tales have something that is frightening in them. Hansel and Gretel throw the witch into the oven. It's in the realm of fantasy, though. It never affects anybody's sensibilities, really.

HARDMAN: Some psychiatrists claim that it does. I don't happen to buy that.

RUSSO: I don't agree with that.

CFQ: In the same respect, Good always wins out over Evil in fairy tales. There are many horror films today where that just doesn't happen, or there is no clear cut sense of good and evil. In NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD there is no clear definition of good or evil.

STREINER: NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD had been out for maybe a year when a story appeared in Life magazine. It just so happened at the time the story appeared, in some small town in Nebraska a parent group was up in arms that the owner of the only theatre in their community opted to play films like NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, and I guess a couple of X-rated films also. Their complaint was that he had a captive audience and if people in that small town wanted to go to the theatre they had to see what the owner thought they should see. But I can't help thinking that when you drop your kid off in front of the show and the marquee says NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, you should know it isn't going to be a Disney film or HANS BRINKER AND THE SILVER SKATES. So, if you don't want your kids to see a film with that title and you have some suspicions as to what it might be, then don't take them. The article I thought was overcritical was the one they eventually reprinted in Reader's Digest, about the effect the film had on an audience of small children. It was originally printed in some Chicago paper, then reprinted in Reader's Digest. Well, he's entitled to his point of view, but we're certainly not monsters. Oh, I don't know, maybe we are!

The thrust of the article was a comparison between NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD and THE THING. I guess when this writer Roger Ebert was younger, he was terrified of THE THING. Well, everyone has grown up since the days of THE THING, and I'm not so sure an audience isn't prepared for a film like NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD. Films have gone beyond that now. And I'm not certain to any higher degree of artistic level. I think a lot of the stuff shot since NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD is so much rubbish, frankly. I think a lot of people after seeing our film, decided they were going to pattern their films after it. I think that's been, on the whole, unsuccessful. But audiences are prepared to cope with things like NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, otherwise they wouldn't keep going back. Either that, or we're raising a real society of masochists or something.

CFQ: I think we've covered the explicit approach to the gore in NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD quite extensively, but after all the discussion about horror films, I'd be interested to know, now, in the light of all you've said, if you feel the gore was justified?

HARDMAN: Yes. At the time I was a negative voice. I didn't think we had to go that far. But I'm very glad we did.

STREINER: But you have to remember that

Some levity behind the scenes of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD that belie happier times. Top: With paint bucket and hammer in hand, director George Romero poses with his cast, going clockwise: Judith Ridley holding a jar of Bosco used as blood in the film, producer Karl Hardman, his real-life and film daughter, Kyra Schon, and Marilyn Eastman, covered with Bosco for her death scene. Bottom: Hardman relaxes between takes as someone applies some fresh Bosco. Like the film itself, the makeup was a community effort contributed by all involved.

Karl can't even face a liverwurst sandwich.

HARDMAN: I still don't see how they did it—biting into that raw liver and heart...

STREINER: Do you want to be excused, Karl?

No, I think it had its place in that film and confronted with the same decisions on basically the same points I would probably be in favor of doing it again. Even though a lot of parent groups think we're raving lunatics.

CFQ: After the success of your first film, one would have expected you to do another horror film, yet what you did next was THE AFFAIR.

STREINER: Image Ten was dissolved before that by its very nature. As a corporation we were only permitted by our corporate character to produce one film. Beyond that there was some disagreement about what the second film should be. As a matter of fact, there was a pretty long stretch of time while various ideas were being kicked around. Everyone had several different ideas, and we finally zeroed in on a horror anthology. We got into beginning discussion on that. For some reason we got off the horror anthology and onto something else. The eventual result was the film now called THE AFFAIR.

CFQ: What horror films have you seen that impressed you?

RUSSO: Not too many.

STREINER: In its time, THE THING terrified me. If you can put PSYCHO in that category, certainly it is one of my all-time favorites. INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS was a good film. Beyond that, there aren't too many. There are several science fiction films, some of the things George Pal did, and there was THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL. That was a good film. VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED had something going for it. But it is really surprising when you sit down and try to recall the films that have made an impression on you. There are so many films your mind just snaps shut on. You can't even recall the titles. Many of the Japanese films such as MOTHRA, I fail to see how they did the business they did, other than the fact that they were a novelty. The Japanese crush cities well but I believe they've all been working from one basic script.

HARDMAN: I was going to mention FRANKENSTEIN, THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA and DRACULA. That places me at a point in time when I was very young and they really scared me.

RUSSO: THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA really scared me, but I was in grade school when I saw it. I remember when I was a kid, really being up for seeing Frankenstein films. But I was always a little disappointed when it was over.

STREINER: From my own point of view, I am more in favor of the Hitchcock brand of suspense and terror than the overt, blatant terror. If you can trigger the audience's imagination you've won the battle. If people can be caused to use their brains, as we probably did listening to Sergeant Preston on the radio, that's invaluable. You can't do everything for them. You've got to trip something in their personal psychology if you want to make them laugh, cry or be frightened. I think the reason we have a hard time recalling good horror films is because serious filmmakers have shied away from them. You can list any number of worthwhile westerns because it was fashionable at the time for a name director to do a Western. Directors who know what they're doing have shied away from horror films.

CFQ: Do you people have any future projects in the works?

STREINER: At New American we have a film we're treating as a direct sequel to NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD called, surprisingly enough, RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD.

CFQ: You don't have any fears about doing a sequel to NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD?

STREINER: No, because the script has really worked out well. I think we've managed to retain the good parts and strip away the bad. It'll stand on its own two feet as a film. I'm very pleased with how the script has gone. We've had a lot of battles about the script and some of the details.

RUSSO: Those were healthy battles in working out the concept. Rudy Ricci and I worked on the story and Rudy wrote the screenplay. I'm also very happy with it. It's unique and a whole different aspect of what happens when the dead come back to life. It's in no way an imitation of the

first film and that was the major problem in writing a sequel.

CFQ: Is there anything any of you would like to say about NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD that we have not covered, or are there any misunderstandings you'd like to clear up that may have resulted from interviews with other principals?

RUSSO: There has been one basic misunderstanding that's cropped up in all the interviews—that, actually, we had nothing to do with the picture!

STREINER: There has been a sort of running feud between people who are still with Latent Image and the people who have left and Hardman Associates. I don't even know how it got started. As far as the success of the picture is concerned, we all have a deeply vested interest in it. I certainly don't dislike, or hate anybody at Latent Image.

HARDMAN: Well, I think you feel put upon because of the obvious attempt to cop the glory on a single-handed basis for the production of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD.

STREINER: Well, yes.

HARDMAN: You know, that's a bit gross, a bit much, I think. I don't know the reason for it.

RUSSO: That's the tone of the Newsweek article.

HARDMAN: Yes. I happen to think that's very unfair when there were so many people involved, and I'm not just talking about myself.

RUSSO: There were so many people involved in ways that were crucial and they don't even come out in the credits. I can think of one point when we were first getting organized, Karl was being considered for director. George then wanted to put his name under consideration. Do you remember, Karl?

HARDMAN: Yes I do. I hadn't until this minute.

CFQ: All of you are then strongly against the "one man movie" concept, especially dealing with NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, because it's quite obvious now that it wasn't that kind of production.

RUSSO: I think filmmaking in general is a process that is very seldom dominated by one person. I think there's a certain mythology that's grown up around directors. I don't believe a director is ever quite so influential in what comes out as the finished product as the mass media, or directors, would like people to believe.

Somebody once said that once you achieve a certain level of talent, after that, making films becomes a matter of luck. If you happen to be a director, then you're the one who gets to deal with all the elements and all the supporting people. The same goes for producing. And, if the final product is successful, everybody says, "Oh! What a genius!"

CFQ: NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD was directed by one man.

RUSSO: George Romero directed the picture and did a damn good job of it.

STREINER: I think you make a bad mistake if you try to direct a film by committee. A producer, or financial people, can only influence production up to a point. Then the person who has been delegated as director, and this is true of any film, I don't care what it is, must focus everything through his viewpoint. Otherwise you have a hodgepodge.

RUSSO: There are certain films, too, that don't require an extraordinary directorial viewpoint. The director doesn't create the film because the script pretty much speaks for itself.

Now there aren't too many ways Duane Jones or Karl could have played their roles. Sometimes things are set in motion, and within certain parameters, they come out about the way anyone would have predicted. Then there are other films that are created from the beginning to end during the production. These films require creative talent, and maybe even genius. But I don't believe NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD is one of those films.

CFQ: Well, there's only one other thing I still don't understand. It's that clothes pole that kept following you down the stairs, Karl. It amazes me that all those people in that farmhouse, their lives in horrifying danger, would take time out to hang up their coats!

CFQ

FILM REVIEWS

LE TRIO INFERNAL

...an absurdly wrenching combination of horror and humor...

LE TRIO INFERNAL A Levitt-Pickman Film Release. 11/74. In Panavision and Eastmancolor. 106 minutes. Produced by Raymond Danon and Jacques Dorfman. Directed by Francis Girod. Screenplay by Girod and Jacques Rouffio based on the novel by Solange Fasquelle. Director of photography, Andreas Winding. Music by Ennio Morricone.

Philomene Romy Schneider
 George Sarret Michel Piccoli
 Catherine Mascha Gomska
 Neomie Andrea Ferreol
 Magali Monica Fiorentini
 Chambon Hubert Deschamps

An accomplished, brave first feature by Francis Girod, **LE TRIO INFERNAL** follows the adventures of Michel Piccoli and his lovely cohort/mistresses, Romy Schneider and Mascha Gomska, who discover, at first accidentally, that they can make a living from marriage, murder and insurance companies. The process is simple: keep marrying off the two girls, kill their husbands and share in the insurance money. If an occasional, necessary accomplice (Hubert Deschamps) threatens to become dangerous, he can also be done in, along with his mistress (Andrea Ferreol). In the film's grisly set-piece, during a Christmas celebration at a country estate, our trio calmly shoot the pair, dissolve their bodies in sulfuric acid, then sell the lavish villa and everything in it for a handsome profit.

The film is an absurdly wrenching combination of horror and humor that doesn't quite work. The gentle, nostalgic mood of the film (it is luxuriously set in post-WWI France) and the genial humor of the first and last third of it are nearly destroyed by the severe middle section—the murder/acid bath/burial sequences—which is shown in clinical detail. After that, Girod cannot recover the film's original buoyant mood, just as Morrissey's **FRANKENSTEIN** becomes extremely tiresome when you realize early in the second reel that the 3-D gimmick can't redeem the movie's childish and empty fascination with gore and camp. Like **LA GRANDE BOUFFE**, **LE TRIO INFERNAL** teeters on the edge of disgust like a drunken aerialist. Unlike **LA GRANDE BOUFFE**, **LE TRIO INFERNAL** is not symbolic; it has no real pretensions to social allegory or political satire, nor is it quite as monstrously, deeply, funny.

Girod's film is more difficult to pigeonhole; its purpose (if it must have one) remains in question. Although the film is extremely well-acted (and Girod, who has done some French TV and shorts, displays his confidence and skills in toning down an old professional like Piccoli, who walks through too many of his films), there is little depth to the trio. Girod has gotten the best performance from Romy Schneider in years, and even she only hints at her fascination with the evil she's doing, at the surprise she feels at being enticed by it. The film moves quite quickly; we see no one discussing or laying out the elaborate plans which are so carefully enacted, so we are dragged along, equally fascinated and repellent.

Girod may be defining, in the trio, a new modern race of emotionally-stunted, clone-like people, although they maddeningly seem to have too

much fun, derive too much enjoyment from their opulent living, for a couple of Siegel's pods. In the final third of the film, Piccoli arranges to "kill" Mascha and substitute a dying girl for the eventual body and collect on the five policies he has taken out on her. The trio picks up a weak, deathly-ill-looking girl—a tubercular orphan—and try to kill her with parties, food, drink, gambling and finally, when nothing else works, an arranged lesbian affair with Mascha (who is playing her nurse) herself. The girl, however, only begins to get better, ruining the plans and attaining a rather healthy glow by all the conventional debauchery.

There are jokes like this flung throughout the film. The biggest one of all is to turn the vile murderer Piccoli, who has already received a military honor in the first sequence of the film, into a highly respected lawyer and later into a highly successful politician (the latter, incidentally, also doubling his need for money). Throughout the early part of the film, Girod makes sure that all the dinner scenes prominently feature soup, which becomes an outrageous joke later on during the bucket-burial of Deschamps and Ferreol, reduced in their acid bath to a rich red lumpy liquid. Despite the hazy purpose of the film, Girod knows exactly what he is doing every step of the way: he has Schneider slip down the stairs on some spilled "remains"—a truly fiendish slapstick—and later she takes time out from the "burial" for a plate of spaghetti. The gleaming white bathroom, tiles and tubs which will soon be fouled remind one of those in **DIABOLIQUE**. Like Hitchcock and shower stalls, one never really sees a bathtub without thinking of Clouzot's film, and Girod builds further on that.

Oddly enough, Girod's film also contains many of the elements of the conventional "well-made" film, including some circular motifs of repeated actions—bed scenes, marriages, funerals, the insurance man counting out policy payoffs with the same manner and speech, and the final duplicate framing of a new infernal trio, implying the adaptability and permanence of evil.

Girod and his film remain elusive and idiosyncratic; if it is about anything, **LE TRIO INFERNAL** is concerned with habit, about how one can accustom himself with no regret or guilt to repeating the most raggedly obscene acts. The film is also more than a little cruel, because it stresses the worthlessness of people by filling the screen with characters whose only function is to be fodder for the trio's hunger. Finally, and most strangely of all, the film is about work—Piccoli and his pals do not earn their money without some sweat—and Girod ultimately makes a foul, hilarious joke of that old bugaboo, the Protestant work ethic.

David Bartholomew

Scenes from **LE TRIO INFERNAL**, currently in release from Levitt-Pickman Films. Top: The trio—Mascha Gomska, Michel Piccoli and Romy Schneider. Middle: Piccoli and Schneider enjoy a tender moment before disposing of a couple of corpses by dissolving them in a bathroom tub full of sulphuric acid. Bottom: Two staples of horror of personality films: the staircase and the "disposing of the body" sequence—Gomska and Schneider schlep a corpse.



YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN

...a witty tribute to those black-and-white movies of the past that never made anyone's blood run cold...

YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN A 20th Century-Fox Release. 12/74. 105 minutes. In Black & White & Plywood. Produced by Michael Gruskoff. Directed by Mel Brooks. Screenplay by Gene Wilder and Brooks. Director of photography, Gerald Hirschfeld, A. S. C. Music composed and conducted by John Morris. Orchestrations by Jonathan Tunick. Violin Solo by Gerald Vinci. Edited by John Howard. Production designer, Dale Hennesy. Set decorator, Bob De Vestel. Assistant director, Marvin Miller. Makeup artist, William Tuttle. Costume designer, Dorothy Jenkins. Special effects, Henry Miller, Jr. and Hal Millar.

Dr. Frankenstein Gene Wilder
 Monster Peter Boyle
 Igor Marty Feldman
 Elizabeth Madeline Kahn
 Frau Blucher Cloris Leachman
 Inga Teri Garr
 Inspector Kemp Kenneth Mars
 Blindman Gene Hackman

For those who spend quiet Saturday afternoons watching age old horror flicks on the television set, **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN** should be a pleasant surprise. Gene Wilder, who plays the young Frankenstein can take major credit for scripting this umpteenth take-off on the Mary Shelley novel and he seems to have a profound influence on the director. Instead of the usual tastelessness of Mel Brooks' other films, **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN** is a witty tribute to those black-and-white movies of the past that never made anyone's blood run cold but still had a unique style that has not been recaptured in contemporary films.

The film is best described as a homage to those ancient horror films. It is a homage rendered with impeccable fidelity. The improbable glimpse of the distant castle sitting atop its very own pinnacle, the cobwebby interiors, the music—both eerie and corny—the specific borrowings (as the hairdo of Elsa Lanchester as **THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN**) all bespeak a loving familiarity with the objects of their affection.

Peter Boyle's monster is based lovingly on Boris Karloff's incarnation in the 1931 *James Whale* classic, but what Boyle lacks is a hint of terror. Karloff's monster would either elicit fear or pity from an audience, but this new "monster" brings out nothing but love. Even in his rampages he is a gentle creature easily stilled by soulful violin music. The secret lies with Boyle's shifty idiot eyes. Confined to muttering variations on a "Mmmuuuummmmm" theme throughout the film, Boyle must constantly rely on expression to form the comedy and the compassion of his role. When Gene Hackman's well-meaning blind man repeatedly pours soup into the monster's lap, Boyle's agonizing combination of stricken eyes and the revealed rubble of gnashed teeth constitutes an excruciatingly funny expression of victimization. With Brooks, the Boyle-Hackman hi-jinks work beautifully as physical vaudeville: the blind man and the monster exchanging toasts only to have the blind man smash the monster's wine mug; the bulky exuberance of Boyle and Hackman literally igniting the monster's exasperation by lighting up the monster's thumb instead of his cigar. Bill Tuttle, one of the best makeup artists in Hollywood, created Boyle's wide-brow monster mask complete with zippered neck (very Gucci). Boyle is physically perfect for the part, so perfect that the makeup seems a caricature of his own features, especially the domed head.

Gene Wilder, as the new Dr. Frankenstein (the grandson of the original), is not as convincing in continued page 30



Christopher Lee as Scaramanga, **THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN**, taunts his mistress (Maud Adams) whom he suspects may have betrayed him. Lee follows ably in the tradition the Bond films have set for exotic, larger than life villains, while, sadly, the hero of the series begins to lose his excitement.

THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN

... James Bond is dead.

THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN A United Artists Release. 12/74. In Color. Produced by Albert R. Broccoli and Harry Saltzman. Directed by Guy Hamilton. Screenplay by Richard Maibaum and Tom Mankiewicz. Music composed and conducted by John Barry. Lyrics by Don Black. Title Song performed by Lulu. Director of photography, Ted Moore and Ossie Morris. Production designer, Peter Murton. Supervising editor, John Shirley. Edited by Roy Poulton. Special effects by John Stears.

James Bond Roger Moore
 Scaramanga Christopher Lee
 Mary Goodnight Britt Eklund
 Andrea Maud Adams
 Nick Nack Herve Villechaize
 J. W. Pepper Clifton James
 Hip Soon Taik Oh
 Hai Fat Richard Loo
 Rodney Marc Lawrence
 M Bernard Lee
 Miss Money Penny Lois Maxwell
 Lazer Marne Maitland

In this, the ninth in the Broccoli-Saltzman series and the tenth James Bond novel to be filmed, Bond is pitted against one of his more bizarre adversaries, Francisco Scaramanga, a million dollar hit man, internationally known as **THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN** because of his penchant for using golden bullets in the gun of the title, which he easily dismantles and conceals on his person in the form of a pen and cigarette case. The killer has one peculiar identifying mark, a third nipple on his chest.

The film is entertaining and has all the gloss that distinguished its predecessors, but followers of Bond have come to realize that James Bond is dead. At least the character created by the late Ian Fleming in thirteen novels and aptly portrayed by Sean Connery has passed away. The Fleming character was a cold professional who could remorselessly gun down a S.P.E.C.T.R.E. agent (consequently the double 0 designation, the license to kill), but Roger Moore's interpretation is so low-keyed that it is a wonder he is any threat whatever to his opponents. Although the screenplay by Richard Maibaum and Tom Mankiewicz attempts to toughen up the character with several callous, brutal actions such as the scene in which Bond slaps around Scaramanga's mistress, Andrea (Maud Adams), this only succeeds in making the contrast more apparent than ever. Roger Moore walks through the role and the audience never feels that his Bond is in any danger.

Opposite Moore's bland heroics are a trio of

villains, all in top form. Christopher Lee infuses the character of Scaramanga with life and purpose, a role of deserved prestige and importance for a master screen villain who has paid his dues in being typecast in a genre with more than its share of low-budget potboilers. Lee's Scaramanga is a man with a job; that job is killing people, and he does it better than anyone else. He takes pride in his work, not the pride of a madman, but the pride of a professional who doesn't pretend to be anything more. While giving Bond a tour of the solar energy plant, pointing out various machines and their function, he freely admits that he doesn't know how it all works. After all, that's not his job. Scaramanga is aided by a French-accented midget, Nick Nack, played by Herve Villechaize, who manages to upstage both leading men. Nick Nack is not the flunky usually tied up with the chief villain but an intelligent, knowledgeable partner with ambition to eventually take over the operation when his boss finally meets his match. Veteran actor Richard Loo who has played the Japanese officer in countless WWII films is Hai Fat, a business magnate who plots to gain a monopoly on the technique for the efficient use of solar energy by stealing an invention, a "solar agitator," and hiring Scaramanga to kill its inventor.

For the most part, the Ian Fleming novel has been abandoned except for its title. No longer is Scaramanga one of Fidel Castro's hired killers and the action has been transferred from Fleming's beloved Jamaica to the Far East. Even the final confrontation in the snake infested swamps as two human animals stalk each other has been transferred indoors to the far less satisfying pseudo-amusement park atmosphere of Scaramanga's hideout. Drama and excitement to be found both in the novels and past film entries have given way to comedy and the absurd. The film reintroduces Clifton James as the stout bayou Sheriff J. W. Pepper, who first met Bond in **LIVE AND LET DIE**. Once again, a boat chase introduces the character for some comic scenes which, while certainly entertaining, go against the basic grain of the material. Bond's off-hand comments come in just the right places and have now become more bold as well as somewhat strained. As Bond finally beds Mary Goodnight (Britt Eklund), the phone next to the bed rings and Bond picks it up to find M on the other end. The secret service chief asks to speak to Goodnight and Bond replies, after some delay, "She's coming now, Sir." This prompted one women's libber to remark that the best Bond film would be one in which he is castrated.

Dan Scapperotti

Have coffin, will travel. Count Dracula (Udo Kier) and his manservant (Arno Juerging) leave Transylvania for the purer pastures of Roman Catholic Italy in search of virgins in **BLOOD FOR DRACULA**, currently in release from Bryanston Pictures.



BLOOD FOR DRACULA

Count Dracula is really a "vampiyah."

BLOOD FOR DRACULA A Bryanston Pictures Release. 10/74. In Color. 93 minutes. Produced by Andrew Braunsberg. Written and directed by Paul Morrissey. Director of photography, Luigi Kuveiller. Production design, Enrico Job. Edited by Franca Silvi, Ted Johnson. Art director, Gianni Giovagnoni. Makeup, Mario De Salvio. Music composed and conducted by Claudio Gizzi. Special effects, Carlo Ramisladi. Production manager, Mara Blasetti, A.O.D.C. Cameraman, Baldo Terzano. Wardrobe supervisor, Benito Persico. First production assistant, Vasco Maffera. Special sound effects, Roberto Arcangeli. Filmed at Cinecitta Studios, Rome.

The Gardner	Joe Dallesandro
Count Dracula	Udo Kier
Dracula's Assistant	Arno Juerging
The Nobleman	Vittoria De Sica
His Wife	Maxime McKendry
Their Daughters	Stefanie Carsini
.....	Dominique Darrell
.....	Milena Vukotic
.....	Silvia Dionisio
A Villager	Roman Polanski

When I sat down to watch the world premiere of Paul Morrissey's **BLOOD FOR DRACULA** at last year's Atlanta International Film Festival, I was very honestly expecting to hate it. Morrissey's previous film, **ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN**, I had found to be a repugnant example of "cynical chic," a campy freak show that degraded films, filmmakers, and audiences alike. Why, it made me ask myself, when there are still so many great (horror) films to be made and so much talent unable to get the opportunity to make them, should people like Warhol and Morrissey who treat films as so much disposable Kleenex be given half a million bucks by Carlo Ponti? Perhaps, I sighed, the film industry was just getting too jaded for me.

At any rate when the tall, redheaded Morrissey stepped onstage to introduce **BLOOD FOR DRACULA**, he was greeted by a thunderous applause, which made me begin to wonder if perhaps I was wrong after all and that audiences really did deserve him. But then when he spoke I was taken completely aback. Totally devoid of pretense and more than a little nervous, Morrissey thanked the audience for being "so nice" in its approval of him. Then, a little embarrassed, he went on to thank the judges for inviting his "silly little movie" to the prestigious festival. And by the end of the screening, I have to admit, Paul Morrissey had just about won me over, at least with his second film.

BLOOD FOR DRACULA is indeed a silly little movie which laughs at the conventions of the traditional horror movie, but it does so with an elegance and sense of craft only hinted at in the previous film. Even Mel Brooks will have to go some to beat its outrageous premise. Dying from a lack of virgin's blood (due to a lack of virgins), Dracula abandons Transylvania for the presumably purer pastures of Roman Catholic Italy. Taking up residence in the house of a wealthy nobleman with four beautiful daughters, the weak, wheel-chair ridden Dracula quickly attacks the first daughter only to find that she's been lying to him about her virginity, sending him into a massive fit of vomiting in the bathroom. In this film, Dracula's menesis is not Van Helsing but the gardener, a stud who always manages to be one daughter ahead of the starving vampire. In the final reel as Dracula pursues the sole intact daughter through the castle, the last minute rescue is provided by the gardener announcing, "There's only one way to save you!" as he rips off her dress and screws her against the living room wall. Then for Grand Guignol fans who wonder what all this sex nonsense is doing in a horror movie, Morrissey ends the film with a Dracula death scene that will take some beating, as the gardener pursues the hissing vampire with an axe, slowing him down by chopping off one limb at a time until there is nothing left to impale with the requisite stake except a quivering basket case.

Perhaps because of its sumptuous period atmosphere and the presence in bit parts of two directors who take their art seriously (Vittoria De Sica and Roman Polanski, whose cameo in a local pub scene is a gem), **BLOOD FOR DRACULA** consistently exudes a style and cinematic flair that was only seen in fleeting glimpses in the previous Morrissey travesty. Even Joe Dallesandro's incompetence as an actor and totally out of place New York accent seems to be used here for a more intentional comic effect, whereas in the earlier film he seemed like a put-on that fell flat. His announcement here that Count Dracula is really a "vampiyah" just about brought down the house with laughter.

I'm not exactly sure where Paul Morrissey is headed as a filmmaker. **BLOOD FOR DRACULA** shows an ability at comedy and parody which transcends the feeble goals of "put-on" exhibited by all his earlier films. Maybe in the end his only claim to fame will be that he took home movies out of the home and put them into the theatre. But when the result is a **BLOOD FOR DRACULA**, maybe that isn't all bad.

John McCarty

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his transition from respected university lecturer to mad scientist but is as funny as ever in slapstick routines. In a part calling for straight charm and wit, Wilder descends too often to his familiar brand of desperate whimsicality and manic moodiness.

Fortunately he is admirably supported by a cast including Marty Feldman as Igor the assistant, a pop-eyed British comedian playing a hunchback (though the hunch switches shoulders a few times). Cloris Leachman is outstanding as the ancient German mistress of the Frankenstein mansion. Madeline Kahn is her usual frigid-hussy self in a cutesy-poo version of Elsa Lanchester. Terri Garr is the invaluable Inga with a roving libido and Kenneth Mar's execution of Inspector Kemp, who is reminiscent less of Transylvanian constables than of Peter Seller's Dr. Strangelove, simply cranks up no discernible comic purpose while his impenetrably Mittel-European accent calls attention to itself by having the villagers complain in unison "Whadidee Say?"

YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN wends its way through the thicket of modern all-or-nothing moviemaking. It is amazing that there is as much honest craftsmanship in the movie as there is. The music hall performance of Young Frankenstein and the monster is nothing less than enchanting. Peter Boyle's Frankenstein makes his first entrance in a bathrobe much as Sid Caesar used to do on "The Show of Shows" with which Brooks used to be involved as writer. And when Wilder and Boyle go into their version of "Puttin' On the Ritz," all of Brooks' smouldering affection for showbiz performers seems to burst into flame.

The film also reflects the old dream man has had of immortality, which itself partly reflects a wish for God-like power. The screenplay not least is a commentary on intolerance and mob action. The messages are not pressed, but are there.

YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN is strewn with sight gags, old jokes and slapstick, yet the film plays much more as a warm and congruent piece, the whole greater than the sum of its parts. Yet it takes more than admirable acting, a clever screenplay and a director's respect for a genre to make a movie successful. An appreciative audience is also necessary. To be enjoyed to its fullest, **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN** should be seen with a packed house, preferably at midnight, a set of circumstances you should not find hard to arrange, for Mel Brooks' film is attracting the general public in throngs as thick as a mob of angry Transylvanian villagers.

Joel Thingvall



We all sell our soul to the Devil in one way or another. William Finley as The Phantom signs over his to Swan (Paul Williams) in Brian De Palma's PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE, currently in release from 20th Century-Fox. The film elaborates on the theme of illusion and reality and is dense with classic horror motifs and genre references.

PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE

...an attempt to analyse the cinema's function as purveyor of illusion...

PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE A 20th Century-Fox Release. 12/74. 91 minutes. In Color by MovieLab. Produced by Edward R. Pressman. Directed and written by Brian De Palma. Executive producer, Gusatve Berne. Director of photography, Larry Pizer. Music produced by Paul Williams. Additional scoring composed and conducted by George Alliceson Tipton. Costume designer, Rosanna Norton. Makeup, Rolf Miller. Edited by Paul Hirsch. Sound, James Tamenbaum. Property master, Erik Nelson.

Swan Paul Williams
The Phantom William Finley
Phoenix Jessica Harper
Philbin George Memmoli
Beef Gerrit Graham
The Juicy Fruits Jeffrey Comanor
The Beach Bums Archie Hahn
The Undeads Harold Oblong

Brian De Palma's numerous references to Hitchcock in his previous film, *SISTERS*, were more than just a homage. *PSYCHO* is based on an audience being led to assume that what is portrayed on the screen is accurate, whereas they are misled constantly. *VERTIGO* is an analysis of what happens when the spectator takes the illusion of reality for reality itself. De Palma's new film, *PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE*, elaborates on the theme of illusion and reality so central to the most important work being done in the cinema today.

A number of remarks are in order about the film's inscription into an existing intertextual space and the interaction of that space with an already existing extratextual, or cultural space. By the term intertextual space I mean the films that pre-exist De Palma's film and to which reference has to be made to understand what he is doing. The title of the film itself is a reference to *PHANTOM OF THE OPERA*, as is the story-line, but De Palma inserts a variety of heterogeneous material. Thus he refers to *THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI*, the sets of Swan's show and the makeup of the singers called The Undeads; to *FRANKENSTEIN*, the lights resembling lightning and the "bringing to life" of Beef as he is lowered onto the stage; to *DRACULA*, Swan's presentation of Beef to the reporters at the airport in a coffin where he bears his fangs and hisses; to be noted here is Swan's dress, reminiscent of that of Lon Chaney in *LONDON AFTER MIDNIGHT*, cloak and top-hat; to *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY*, Swan stays the same for twenty years as part of his pact.

The intertextual filmic references derive a

considerable amount of their effect from their inscription into an extratextual space, that of our culture in general. It is not necessary to have seen the films of Tashlin and Lucas to understand the parody at work in the opening sequence of *PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE*. We have all witnessed, at least on TV, innumerable pop sequences of this kind and De Palma pushes their presentation over the limits and into the grotesque. So it is with the more specific filmic references already cited. Many people will not have seen any of these films, but the literary fame of Shelley, Stoker and Wilde is sufficient for the stories to be fairly well-known to the public in general. Their view of what the films/books actually are may be false, but the myths are now part of our culture and De Palma can evoke them in an elliptical fashion without literally naming them.

Clearly, however, the more one knows about these phenomena, the easier it will be to understand De Palma's film beyond the mere story. The problem for the uninitiated spectator lies in the fact that the majority of the references are not made clear in the script, but through signifiers. Thus, the Phantom's mask is a signifier that does not simply denote a mask, but which connotes disfigurement and the *PHANTOM OF THE OPERA* (book and films). Swan's mansion, plunged into total darkness except for a light at the top and the flashes of lightning which illuminate it, is a signifier connoting, on an extratextual level, the sinister and, on an intertextual level, Castle Dracula, the Old Dark House and the House of Usher. De Palma even brings a specific cinematic code into play at one point: a forward tracking shot as Winslow Leach approaches the mansion, reminiscent of Vera Miles approaching the Bates' home at the end of *PSYCHO*. Only in the references to the Faust legend is De Palma actually explicit, although there is an interesting signifier in the opening sequence that has come to connote, if not Satan himself, then an emissary of some sort: the pair of hands clad in immaculate white gloves and belonging to a person we don't see (actually Swan who does not appear until later). Other signifiers come into play in this constant intertextual activity: the candlesticks that Swan moves in order to open a secret door. How many horror films have used this device over the years? More, one suspects, than anyone can count or remember. The mirror in front of the secret passage is another signifier at work here, however, it is much more interesting and functions as an intratextual reference, drawing attention to the film's place within the creation of a larger illusion.

The secret door behind the mirror is pretty commonplace, but De Palma is not concerned in *PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE* with a homage to *cinéfantastique* or an extended parody of pop singers. Consider the nature of illusion as revealed in two key sequences in the film: the reconstitution of the Phantom's voice and the song that precedes Beef's spectacular entry. In the first case it seems to be a simple reconstitution of his damaged vocal cords, but De Palma's camera movement—a long pan over the wires—suggests something else. To begin with, the voice of the Phantom is cracked, artificial and scarcely recognizable. Thanks to the skill Swan shows in manipulating the machinery, analogous to his skill in manipulating people's responses to his spectacles, it becomes a "normal" voice. Given the setting of the film, we can see that De Palma is exposing the falseness of recording, in music and in film, by showing how it is possible to transform one set of sounds into another, the illusion being mistaken for real and grasped as natural. The mirror may reflect exactly what is before it, but it cannot reflect the relationship of that object/person/event to other objects/persons/events not portrayed. Similarly, anyone hearing the Phantom's new voice without knowing the truth would take it for his "real" voice.

This very important theme of illusion—the basis of De Palma's previous film, *SISTERS*, and taken to its limits in *PEEPING TOM*, *PERFORMANCE* and *WESTWORLD*—is magisterially conveyed in the song sequence mentioned. The pop singers have guitars with "swords" attached which they use to "dismember" dummies strategically placed in the audience, thus adding an extra aura of horror to the proceedings. As heads and limbs fly about, the spectators go wild with ecstasy; they are being led to participate in a spectacle to the point where their ability to separate illusion and reality will fail them. This happens when the Phantom electrocutes Beef: the spectators think his antics are part of the show and go berserk. Even after he has been fried and gone up in flames, they still cheer and applaud frenetically. The same response is present in the final sequence where Swan ages suddenly and the Phantom loses his mask and dies from an earlier self-inflicted stab-wound: one of the spectators, carried away by the events, crawls along the floor beside him, quite oblivious to the nature of the situation. As with *SISTERS*, *PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE* is an attempt to analyse the cinema's function as purveyor of illusion, encouraging audience identification to the point where it merges and becomes one with the film.

Reynold Humphries

SHORT NOTICES



Roddy McDowall.

ARNOLD A Cinerama Release. 4/74. In Color. 94 minutes. Produced by Andrew J. Fenady. Directed by Georg Fenady. Screenplay by Jameson Brewer and John Fenton Murray. With: Stella Stevens, Roddy McDowall, Elsa Lanchester, Patrick Knowles, Farley Granger, Shani Wallace.

From the people who gave us (sigh) **TERROR IN THE WAX MUSEUM**, yet it begins on a promising note. Four pallbearers carry a coffin into a stately English manor and in their wake comes Stella Stevens, dressed as a demure bride and accompanied by her maids and flower girls. Is it a funeral? Or a wedding? It's a bit of both as Miss Stevens, anxious to inherit a fortune, marries the newly-deceased lord of the house, Arnold (Norman Stewart). The will, however, stipulates she must remain at his coffin-side the rest of her life, thus putting a crimp in her plans to run away with the corpse's worthless brother (Roddy McDowall).

The film threatens to become one of those old-fashioned, comfortably chilling Agatha Christie-style mysteries as several of Arnold's greedy relatives are killed, one by one. But instead of emerging as a black comedy, the project is only a bruised one—with at least one graphic mutilation-murder by acid which makes this a very dubious entertainment for small children. It never achieves the high wit and low merriment called for in its conception. In addition, some miscast minor roles help anchor the film to a low-grade berth. For instance, Bernard Fox is so leaden as a mutton-headed constable that it becomes offensive to have him survive to the end while McDowall, who demonstrates the proper mocking tone for the material, is one of the first to go.

Robert L. Jerome

BETTY BOOP SCANDALS OF 1974 A Crystal Pictures Release. 9/73. In Black & White. 90 minutes. Presented by Sidney Tager. Produced by Max Fleischer and Alfred Weiss. Directed by Dave Fleischer. Voice of Betty: Mae Questel.

The Boop Revival is in full swing: over 100 cartoon shorts originally filmed in black & white have been converted to color for TV release. Nostalgia Press has a forthcoming book by Leslie Cabarga about the Fleischer studio; and theatergoers can see ten shorts from the Out of the Inkwell, Screen Songs and Talkartoons series in this compilation feature. Fleischer reigned from 1917 to 1941; this retro only covers the years 1928 to 1934, the period when Betty was introduced (1932). After a brief written intro crawl (a la Blackhawk Films or the Museum of Modern Art), in which Betty is compared to Daisy Duck, Minnie Mouse and Petunia Pig, the shorts are unspooled in the following sequence: **MINNIE THE MOOCHER** ('32), **BETTY'S RISE TO FAME** ('32), **KOKO'S EARTH CONTROL** ('28), **STOOPNOCRACY** ('33), **BIMBO'S INITIATION** ('31), **HA' HA! HA!** ('34), **BOILESK** ('33), **WHEN THE RED, RED ROBIN COMES BOB BOB BOBBIN' ALONG** ('32), **SWING YOU SINNERS** ('30), **SNOW WHITE** ('33).

KOKO'S EARTH CONTROL, the most inventive of the lot, is shown in its original silent form with no added track. Koko tries to prevent a dog from pulling a switch that "will destroy the Earth." Once pulled, tilted camera live-action inserts show gravity shifting with people sliding down a sidewalk. Simple film trickery, but it's a moment worthy of avant-garde film artist Hans Richter. Live-action in the other films includes Cab Calloway singing "Minnie the Mocher," radio "nut" comedians Stoopnagle and Budd and a newspaper reporter interviewing Fleischer and Betty (in **BETTY'S RISE TO FAME**).

The surrealistic imagery flashes by: Tombstones sing. Bimbo the dog is chased by a walking barn. Cars laugh. Demons march off to infinity. A female face changes into a frying pan with two fried eggs. A bizarre creation with no torso dances while singing "St. James Infirmary." Surreal overload sets in. By the seventh cartoon, the audience seemingly wants to switch to another channel but can't.

The film calls out for some kind of history/documentation of Fleischer (who died, September 11, 1972), excerpts from his animated science features (**THE EINSTEIN THEORY OF RELATIVITY**, **DARWIN'S THEORY OF EVOLUTION**)

and his two fantasy features (**GULLIVER'S TRAVELS**, **MR. BUG GOES TO TOWN**) and interviews with former Fleischer staffers. (Larry Riley, for instance, was recently third-billed animator on **FRITZ, THE CAT**). Since neither **BETTY BOOP FOR PRESIDENT** nor **BETTY IN BLUNDERLAND** are included, one can only wonder what other excellent Fleischer shorts have been left out.

Bhob Stewart

CHINATOWN A Paramount Pictures Release. 7/74. In Panavision and Technicolor. 130 minutes. Produced by Robert Evans. Directed by Roman Polanski. Screenplay by Robert Towne. With: Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunaway, John Huston, Perry Lopez, John Hillerman, Bruce Glover.

Even before he made **ROSEMARY'S BABY**, movie critics used to label Roman Polanski's films as macabre and bizarre. He had attained a promising reputation with **CUL-DE-SAC**, **KNIFE IN THE WATER**, **REPULSION** and was beginning to enjoy the fruits of his artistic genius. His directorial vision was dominated by an awareness of the absurd and a sense of irony. There is no doubt he viewed his life the same way. How can an artist's vision be separated from his life?

Understandably then, when Polanski's wife, Sharon Tate, some of his friends, and an unborn son were murdered by the Manson clan in 1969, there was an uneasy expectation surrounding the film career he would, sooner or later, have to resume. Overnight, he had lost his artistic reputation and had become the famous husband of a dead woman and an unfortunate celebrity in one of the most publicized and sensational murder trials of the century.

In response to the speculation about **MACBETH**, his first movie to be made two years after the tragedy, Polanski stated that the crime was being "reviewed in terms of my films." He must have realized that the audience wouldn't accept anything else. So, in order to purge himself of the guilt we assumed he possessed (he was in Europe at the time of his wife's death), he took something safe, a Shakespeare play, and slaughtered it on the screen. Never has Shakespeare been interpreted so violently. Most critics, either too kind or too timid, refused to recognize Polanski's ploy, but a few readily assented—"One sees the Manson murders in this **MACBETH** because the director has put them there," stated Pauline Kael.

Now, five years after the misfortune, Polanski has presented us with another, more personal film, that enables us to share in his sense of loss. It is an immaculate masterpiece. We are made to care about the people in this movie. The pain at the film's end is miserably sharp. Polanski's ironic vision reminds us that some things in life, no matter how horrid or bizarre, can only be attributed to bad luck. It is not a work of *cinefantastique*, although in style and imagery it resonates close to the boundaries of the genre. Paul Zimmerman expressed the association most aptly in his review in *Newsweek* when he said the film "is a brilliant cinematic poem in the style of Poe circa 1974."

Joel Thingvall

GOLDEN NEEDLES An American-International Pictures Release. 7/74. In Color & Scope. 90 minutes. Produced by Fred Weintraub and Paul Heller. Directed by Robert Clouse. Screenplay by S. Lee Pogostin and Sylvia Schneble. With: Joe Don Baker, Elizabeth Ashley, Ann Sothern, Burgess Meredith, Jim Kelly, Roy Chiao.

Strong character involvement and briskly edited action scenes connect very stylishly with each other in this delightful **MALTESE FALCON** take-off, as some fortune hunters seek a gold statue with youth-giving acupuncture needles. Joe Don Baker, in a performance of perfectly subdued intensity, and the gracefully sultry Elizabeth Ashley, make for an appealing team (so they're not Nicholson and Dunaway, so what?) as they carry out a millionaire's mission to find the priceless statue. Burgess Meredith's delightfully fruity and flirty rich man's rich man is probably the film's character highlight, although his fate is left undiscovered at the end.

Although the plotting and dialogue are extremely clever, weak scene transitions, the sudden appearance and disappearance of Jim Kelly, and some obvious, perfunctory trimming, does inhibit the complete success of this genre entertainment. Still, the film is often strikingly, beautifully stylized, good escapism fun, and Robert Clouse, at long last, demonstrates an honest flair for character, action, and visual expression.

Dale Winogura

THE BLOOD-SPATTERED BRIDE A Europix International Release. 1/74. In Color. 83 minutes. A Morgana Film Production. Executive producer, Antonio Perez Olea. Written and directed by Vicente Aranda. With: Simon Andrieu, Dean Selmier, Maribel Martin, Alexandra Bastedo.

In case you haven't been to the drive-ins for the last few years, lesbianism has become an important element in vampire films. Actually such films only take the implicit sexuality of the vampire legends and make it explicit. **THE VAMPIRE LOVERS**, **DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS**, **LUST FOR A VAMPIRE**, and now this Spanish production, have evolved from Sheridan leFanu's tale "*Carmilla*."

The film should be an exercise in *deja vu* for fans of the genre: a husband brings his blushing bride to his ancestral home, replete with family portraits dating back hundreds of years; right away, spooky things start to happen. The bride comes under the spell of the ravishing *Carmilla*, who urges her to forsake the amatory advances of her groom for the joys of sapphism. The film dwells more on lesbianism than on vampirism, which may or may not say something significant about conditions in Spain during Franco's declining years.

Along the way there are some nice touches, as when the husband discovers *Carmilla* buried naked in the sand with only one hand and a snorkel protruding. And any film that ends with a freeze frame of a man cutting off a dead woman's breast followed by the National Enquireresque headline, "**MAN CUTS OUT HEARTS OF THREE WOMEN.**" can lay claim to no mean amount of moxie.

Frank Jackson

Maribel Martin as **THE BLOOD-SPATTERED BRIDE**, a Spanish version of leFanu's "*Carmilla*."



Cesar Romero.

THE SPECTRE OF EDGAR ALLAN POE A Cinerama Release. 4/74. In Color. 89 minutes. Produced, directed and written by Mohy Qandor. With: Robert Walker, Jr., Cesar Romero, Tom Drake, Carol Ohmart, Mary Grover, Mario Milano, Karen Hartford, Dennis Fimple, Paul Bryar, Frank Packard, Marsha Mae Jones.

This film purports to explain how Poe, a frustrated Baltimore literary critic, became transfixed by madness, evil and the macabre to become, as a lengthy prologue informs us, "a neurotic, and that his misfortune." It seems that his fiance Lenore is nearly buried alive and because of the event is carted off to an asylum run by Cesar Romero, a scientist given to conducting unusual experiments in his spare time. Out of this, we are expected to pick various elements that turned up later in Poe's stories and poems. The film runs out of steam long before the end, when it brings in an escaped madman and an axe-wielding madwoman who collaborate in a final bloodbath.

Robert Walker, in makeup that looks startlingly like the historical Poe, occasionally infuses life into this mess. In a couple of scenes played with a pit full of snakes, he looks genuinely as terrified as the character he's playing. Writer producer director Mohy Qandor, who should perhaps be discouraged from further filmmaking, exhibits such a dumb respect for null-and-void fright plays like quivering shadows on walls, thunderstorms, black rolling clouds and dried-icy chemicals that the film becomes not so much bad as pitifully naive. Also, a banal actress, Mary Grover, plays Lenore with neither brains nor beauty sufficient to be the sole inspiration, as the film keeps suggesting, for a genius, mad or otherwise.

David Bartholomew

THE FOLKS AT THE RED WOLF INN A Scope III Release. 11/72. In Color. 90 minutes. Produced by Michael Macready. Directed by Bud Townsend. Screenplay by Allen J. Actor. With: Linda Gillin, Arthur Space, John Neilson, Mark Jackson, Michael Macready, Earl Parker, Janet Wood, Margaret Avery.

For some unholly reason, Hollywood seems to be linking cannibalism with comedy! This attempt deserves our attention not only because of some of its tasteful black comedy, but also for its too rarely seen humanity. Naturally, most of the film's yucks come from the anticipated scenes at the dinner table. Bowls of soup with feet floating aimlessly about in the broth, the overdone "lady-fingers" pun, and the spare ribs sequence are all deserving of our critical appreciation. Though some of the eating sequences grow out of proportion and ruin themselves, humor is more often than not aroused by the faces of the hosts of the Red Wolf Inn.

The young cannibal, affectionately called "Baby John" by the hosts, who are his grandfather and grandmother, falls in love with one of the captive girls in a memorable scene on the beach. The two play with the sand, building castles, until they slowly become aware of one another. Baby John looks awkwardly over to the girl and turns away gently when she returns the gaze. The hint of a kiss taunts the two until their lips finally meet, not quite on target. The film offers an impeccable cast, particularly Linda Gillin as the heroine, light and witty humor, and some literally brilliant direction.

Tim Lucas

CRYPT OF THE LIVING DEAD A Coast Industries, Inc. Release. 10/73. 93 minutes. In Color & Scope. Directed by Ray Danton. With: Andrew Prine, Mark Damon, Patty Sheppard.

An isolated setting known in folklore as Vampire Island, a subterranean tomb containing the well-preserved body of a woman whose bloodlust forced King Louis VII to bury her alive in 1269, and the arrival of an American engineer bent on opening the crypt because, in part, he doesn't believe all the "garbage" about vampires? These are the ingredients of a better-than-average horror film which misses its full potential once the beastly beauty begins prowling the night. With



In **BLAZING SADDLES**, Cleavon Little faces the executioner, a take-off on Karloff's Mord portrayal.

her tiara and faintly ridiculous medieval attire, the High Priestess of Vampires comes across as a rather stately Rose Bowl Pageant Queen. Still, a feature with at least one memorable line—"She's smart... about 700 years smart!"—is nothing to dismiss lightly.

Robert L. Jerome

MAN ON A SWING A Paramount Pictures Release. 2/74. In Technicolor. 108 minutes. Produced by Howard B. Jaffe. Directed by Frank Perry. Screenplay by David Zelag Goodman. With: Cliff Robertson, Joel Grey, Dorothy Trisitan, Peter Masterson, Lane Smith, Dianne Hull, Christopher Allport, Gil Gerard, Richard Dryden, Alice Drummond, George Voskovec.

This red-herring jammed melodrama gives Joel Grey ample opportunity to go on a field-day as a young man who may or may not be a clairvoyant and/or rapist murderer. The casting of Grey as the intense young man is perfect. Though the actor seems to push his character beyond believability at times, he manages, for the most part, to interchange boyish concern and innocence with a strange capacity for bursts of violence sometimes surfacing to keep viewer emotions shifting from empathy to suspicion.

Cliff Robertson is a police inspector investigating the brutal rape murder of a young girl. Enter Grey, who is able to answer detailed questions about the crime, seems convinced that a similar killing is imminent, but who cannot back his claims of clairvoyance by passing a test administered by a parapsychologist.

Screenwriter David Zelag Goodman manages to allow all of his central characters (including Robertson) to come under suspicion and throws about red-herrings with seeming glee and abandon. Robertson finally becomes convinced that Grey is the psychotic killer and attempts to build a case against him. When the final riddle is solved, it is to the credit of director Frank Perry that the enigma surrounding Grey is kept shrouded. We spend 108 minutes wondering about Grey and are left wondering beyond the fade-out. There seems ample evidence to support varied conclusions and Goodman and Perry avoid copping out for the sake of tying up the loose ends. Adam Holender's photography and Lalo Schiffrin's sometimes sparse, typically eerie, but usually good musical score and the realistic casting of unknowns in minor roles add to the overall effectiveness of an intriguing and generally thought-provoking thriller.

John Duvoli

Joel Grey.



BLAZING SADDLES A Warner Bros Release. 2/74. In Panavision and Technicolor. 93 minutes. Produced by Michael Hertzberg. Directed by Mel Brooks. Screenplay by Brooks, Norman Steinberg, Andrew Bergman, Richard Pryor, Alan Unger based on an original story by Bergman. With: Cleavon Little, Gene Wilder, Harvey Korman, Madeline Kahn, Slim Pickens, David Hudson, Liam Dunn, Alex Karras, John Hillerman, George Furth, Claude Starrett, Jr., Mel Brooks.

Mel Brooks begins superbly with Frankie Laine singing the bouncing title song over a long Panavision stretch of dusty country. The vintage Warner Bros logo appears only to be burst by a rush of credits printed in the bold and golden raised letters (reserved for westerns and epics) that squat lustily across the screen. It is a warm and proud moment which utilizes both nostalgia and satire. But from there the film runs downhill; the rest is only intermittently as hilarious as it could be.

With five screenwriters credited, and a scissored running time from a reported original 125 minutes to the present 93, it is hard to assign blame where it's due, but I suspect director Mel Brooks deserves the lion's share. While I enjoyed his earlier **THE PRODUCERS** (1968) and the comparatively literary **THE TWELVE CHAIRS** (1970), his satire of western films after a few reels becomes extremely hard to take. Good movie comedy, as Woody Allen is increasingly discovering, demands, in an apt phrase here, tight reigns. The film finally succumbs to the strain-for-every-effect syndrome (lots of hits but few runs) that made excessive epics like **IT'S A MAD, MAD, MAD, MAD WORLD** and **CASINO ROYALE** practically unwatchable. The film is a collection of funny gags, like beads on a string, but there is no development to the humor, no strong drive behind it, no crescendos like we find in Jacques Tati. Unlike Tati's films, Brooks here is often screamingly funny, but there is no wit and little intelligence involved. The film lacks a true design, and the longer it goes on, the more it resembles a painfully extended spiel from a tired stand-up comedian like Henny Youngman.

Repetition kills humor, even the cheap shots we get here. When the climactic fight spills over onto the set of a Busby Berkeley-ish musical (and Brooks does have a genuine flair, pace "Springtime for Hitler," for sending up lavish production numbers) and hence to the studio commissary and into modern L.A., the comic anarchy seems forced and unguided. Just as Brooks seems unable to find the right ends for many of his skits and simply fades them out, so he really can't find a good ending for the entire film. The Cadillac off into the sunset is, like a lot of the film, less than predictable. When villain Hedley Lamarr (Harvey Korman) gathers his gang of cutthroats (the film's plot is archetypal), and we discover in a long long pan Arabs, Ku Klux Klanners and Nazis milling about waiting to sign up, we see it only as a derivative nod to **DUCK SOUP** or even **THE STEAGLE** (1971).

David Bartholomew

APARTMENT ON THE THIRTEENTH FLOOR An Atlas International Release. 10/74. In Color. 98 minutes. Produced by Joe Truchado. Directed by Eloy de la Iglesia. With: Vincent Parra, Emma Cohen, Vicki Lagos.

It is tempting to say this film never gets off the ground floor, but in all fairness, it does get off to a good start with some bloody documentary like footage filmed in a slaughterhouse. The protagonist is a slaughterhouse employee who casually eats a sandwich amidst the messy goings-on. Along the way, the film reveals itself to be the biggest meat fetish film since **PRIME CUT** was released.

Though his existence seems typical of a bachelor workingman (his pin-up collection is neatly juxtaposed with the meat in the slaughterhouse), the protagonist's way of life belies his instability. The fun begins when he murders an old cab

driver who objects to his using the back seat of the cab for sexual purposes. His girl friend urges him to give himself up, but he strangles her in the middle of a long kiss (the only sequence I've seen in a non-porno film to successfully blend sadism and eroticism); his brother discovers her body under the bed ("Better to have married her than to have done this!" he exclaims), and is promptly dispatched with a wrench; the dead brother's fiancée has her throat slit, and her father receives a meat cleaver in the face; finally, the village tart makes a social call, and the protagonist rewards her bountifulness by bashing in her head. Understandably, such activities create a housekeeping problem: flies gather inside and dogs congregate outside. So the protagonist chops up the bodies, transports the parts in a gym bag, and dumps them into a meat pulverizer. He also purchases large quantities of room deodorizer.

How can such a film end? Does the murderer plunge to his death from the thirteenth floor apartment? Is he ground up and fed to the dogs? Sadly, the film ends with a whimper rather than a bang: at the behest of a fragile young man who has witnessed the murders, the murderer confesses and turns himself in to the authorities.

The film is another Spanish-made, English-dubbed drive-in chaser. It's no worse than its domestic counterparts; the dubbing just makes it seem so. The Spanish horror films I've seen all have been strong on gore, ritual and spectacle, which raises the intriguing possibility that the Spanish horror genre has been heavily influenced by the bullfight. Now, there's a good term paper topic for some Spanish/Film double major.

Frank Jackson

THE WEREWOLF OF WASHINGTON A Diplomat Pictures Release. 9/73. In Color. 90 minutes. A Millico Production. Produced by Nina Schulman. Written, directed and edited by Milton Moses Ginsberg. With: Dean Stockwell, Biff McGuire, Clifton James, Beeson Carroll, Michael Dunn, Jane House, Stephen Cheng.

A reporter (Stockwell) vacationing in Budapest, is bitten by a werewolf; he then returns to D.C. to become a Presidential press aide. This sounds like an idea with much potential, and the film's clever ad campaign ("a biting satire") seemed to confirm that belief. But the satire isn't biting. The laughs are few and also far between... mild references to Watergate. Presidential hypocrisy and concern about image. A press conference scene, for instance, lacks a true imaginative thrust, falling far short of the kind of humor and drama that has characterized actual Nixon press conferences on television. As Nixon's evasive rhetoric competes with his heavily Thorazine reactions and behavior, and questions become more specific, the atmosphere becomes charged and totally unpredictable. The denials more defensive ("Well, I'm not a crook."), the Nixon grin more fanglike. Until, finally, one becomes aware that the President of the United States has hair growing between his eyebrows—the Sign of the Werewolf! Nixon himself suggests the route this film should have taken: Woody Allen styled unpredictability with the President becoming a werewolf at mid-point in the film, continuing to hold press conferences, issuing denials as White House aides attempt to cover-up the truth. With David Frye's Nixon impression extrapolated into lycanthropy, this missed opportunity seems regrettable.

As it stands, there is some excellent cinematography, with many striking full moon shots, and a moody score. There's a carefully conceived performance by Dean Stockwell replete with werewolf transformation scenes in the classic manner. Most of the laughs go to Beeson Carroll, a flexible actor whose talent is finally beginning to surface in increasingly important film roles. After bits in **MISTER BUDDWING**, **BANANAS** and others, this is Carroll's best appearance to date.

Bob Stewart

THE WEREWOLF OF WASHINGTON confronts Stephen Cheng and Biff McGuire (The President).



Donald Pleasence & Walking Venus Flytrap.

MUTATIONS A Columbia Pictures Release. 6/74. In Color. 91 minutes. A Getty Picture Corporation, Ltd. Film. Produced by Robert D. Weinbach. Directed by Jack Cardiff. Screenplay by Robert D. Weinbach and Edward Mann. With: Donald Pleasence, Tom Baker, Brad Harris, Julie Ege, Michael Dunn, Scott Antony, Jill Haworth, Olga Anthony, Lisa Collings, Joan Scott, Toby Lennon, Richard Davies, John Wreford, Ethne Dunne, Tony Mayne, Molly Tweedie, Kathy Kitchen.

All the clichés and devices of the monster movies of the fifties have been combined here with the mudgy of recent years, and although the result falls as a horror film, it is an entertaining, unintentionally funny delight reminiscent of those earlier, dreadful double features of yore. Donald Pleasence, who menaced James Bond in **YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE** and tracked down the subterranean creatures in **RAW MEAT**, plays Dr. Nolter whose opening lecture discloses his history that animal and plant life will eventually be combined to form a new species able to withstand the changing environment. He is, of course, experimenting to this end in his spare time, aided by the nefarious Lynch (Tom Baker), a deformed owner of a carnival side-show who hopes to be cured of his ugliness. Pleasence, who at times resembles Peter Lorre, stands out from the performances of the rest of the cast.

In a vain attempt to emulate **FREAKS**, members of a real sideshow are used, including Willie "Pop-eye" Ingram, Esther "Alligator Girl" Blackmon, Hugh "Pretzel Boy" Baily and Felix "Frog Boy" Duarte. The pathos of the earlier classic is absent, and the freaks interact with the normal only in a professional manner and in the opening scene where they menace the film's first victim. The late Michael Dunn appears as the show's other owner, who rents the use of the freaks by Nolter and Lynch to acquire fodder for their misguided experiments.

Unintentional humor is all. In one scene Julie Ege sees what her boyfriend, Scott Antony, has been turned into (a walking venus flytrap, a huge joke in itself, but artfully constructed by makeup artist Charles Parker, just the same), and her mind snaps. An examining physician proclaims, "It must have been some kind of a shock."

The time-lapse photography which opens the film and recurs throughout was stunningly accomplished by Ken Middleham whose growing list of credits in the genre include similar work in **THE HELLSTROM CHRONICLE** and **PHASE IV**. His technique plays an important part in the closing scenes of the film.

Dan Scapperotti



Jackson Bostwick.

SHAZAM! A CBS Weekly Series. Saturday morning, 10:30 A.M. E.D.T. Premiere 9/7/74. 25 minutes. Videotape color. Produced by Bob Chenault (Filmation Associates). Directed by Holley Morse et al. Teleplays by Don Glut, Len Janson, Chuck Menville, et al. With: Jackson Bostwick, Les Tremayne, Michael Gray.

For more than thirty years in comic magazines that appeal to all age groups, Billy Batson, boy newscaster for WHIZ-TV and Radio, has been speaking the magic name of Shazam to become, in a flash of thunderous lightning, the original Captain Marvel, the world's mightiest mortal who carries on a never ending battle against such wonderfully outrageous villains as Sivana, the world's wickedest scientist, Mr. Mind, the evil worm, and King Kull, a stone axe-wielding barbarian supreme. In the comics, even Captain Marvel's friends and allies have been whimsically outrageous characters. Mr. Tawky Tawny, the intelligent talking tiger, for example.

Now though, Captain Marvel and Billy Batson have come alive on television, every Saturday morning on CBS. Filmation Associates' new live action, partly animated half hour show, however, has been specially conceived to appeal only to young people. So when Billy Batson (Michael Gray) speaks the wizard Shazam's name on TV these days, more changes occur than Billy becoming Captain Marvel. CBS' bolt of magic lightning, in fact, brings with it a nearly complete new version of Captain Marvel's fabulous world.

In direct contrast to Captain Marvel's witty four color magazine concept of amazing adventures, oftentimes preposterous though always lovable and memorable characters, and charming innocence, CBS-TV stars a Captain Marvel and Billy Batson who very much live in today's real world, where they become involved in a series of highly moralistic exploits that among other objectives focus heavily on child-adult relationships, judgement seeking and problems young people face today. Too, the problems dealt with on the TV program are substantially solved by young Billy himself, not Captain Marvel. The world's mightiest mortal does, however, appear at least once in each episode, generally to perform a super-stunt that saves the day, if not some youngster's life. At that, Billy Batson only becomes Captain Marvel when all other solutions to the problem on hand have failed: when Billy or other youngsters in the stories are unable themselves to further cope with the problem. For example, the episode entitled "The Brain," saw Captain Marvel save a youth from certain death in the metal jaws of an ore crusher. After bringing the boy to safety he admonished the youth and his friends saying: "Your initiation almost had a sad ending. Equipment like this is no place to play around."

Produced by Norm Prescott and Lou Scheimer's Filmation Associates, also the executive producers of the animated STAR TREK Saturday morning show, the program has been purposely designed to chronicle human, not superhuman problems. The basic aim is to show youngsters solving or at least trying to solve their own problems. The intent is to leave both the series' characters and the youngsters in the viewing audience alike feeling better off for having "shared" in the adventures.

On television, Captain Marvel has become relevant. Fantasy characters like Sivana, Mr. Mind and Tawky Tawny need not apply. They would be out of place in the new concept. But despite these and other important alterations or eliminations from Captain Marvel's comic book origins, including the complete removal of the mighty, wise old wizard Shazam himself, who is replaced in the TV program by Mr. Mentor (Les Tremayne), a father-figure who travels the world with Billy Batson, the Captain Marvel of television should still score a large hit with legions of young viewers. The programs aimed at them are conceived thoughtfully, seriously, though with touches of humor here and there, and the stories succeed on their own terms. Captain Marvel himself, played by Jackson Bostwick, unlike fellow superhero Batman in recent "live" TV years, is played for a straightaway action hero and his basic appeal has been translated well enough into the new TV format.

Ron Haydock

FANTASTIQUE

RIKKI-TIKKI-TAVI A CBS Special. 1/9/75. In color. 25 minutes. Produced, written and directed by Chuck Jones. Based on *The Jungle Book* by Rudyard Kipling. Narrated by Orson Welles. With the voices of: June Foray, Les Tremayne, Michael Le Claire, Shep Menken, Lennie Weinrib.

Since the Garden of Eden onward snakes have had a bad press, and this Chuck Jones cartoon soiree does nothing to improve the image with its resident Cobra family of villainous vipers plotting the elimination of some colonial Britishers who have settled in India. But the eternal virtues are preserved in the warmth and heroism projected by the show's star, a mongoose who proves as whirlwind fast as the Roadrunner and as lovable as Mickey Mouse. His rescue of the English folk and his devotion to his little master avoid the gooeyness of a more molasses-filled approach to the Kipling material, and only a jarring musical interlude seems out of place. (Why are singing animals de rigueur in these animated affairs?) At any rate, the visuals are top-drawer and a reminder of how shabbily the distributors treated Jones' feature-length production *THE PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH*.

Robert L. Jerome

THE DAY THE EARTH MOVED An ABC Segment of Movie of the Week. 9/18/74. 75 minutes. In color. Produced by Bobby Sherman and Ward Sylvester (ABC Circle Films). Directed by Robert Michael Lewis. Teleplay by Jack Turley and Max Jack from a story by Turley. Filmed on location at Dry Lake, Nevada and at 20th Century-Fox in Hollywood. With: Jackie Cooper, Cleavon Little, William Windom, Beverly Garland, Kelly Thordsen, Lucille Benson, Ellen Blake, E. J. Andre, Sid Melton, Tammy Harrington, Stella Stevens.

Aerial photographer Jackie Cooper is held captive in a small town on a trumped-up charge. A little girl helps him escape. Back at his office, he discovers that some chemically-unbalanced film can show where earthquakes are going to strike. And one is going to hit that same small town. But does our stalwart Jackie say "fuck 'em?" Nope. He flies off and rescues every man jack of them, except the heavy of course. Then the town falls into flinders. That's about it. The picture is silly and seems to have been written by two people who didn't know each other. There is some interest for disaster fans in watching the little town collapse. The effects are surprisingly spectacular for a TV movie. There's a particularly nice shot of all the windows across the front of a building breaking sequentially. Kind of fun, but truly stupid.

Bill Warren

SATAN'S TRIANGLE An ABC Segment of Tuesday Movie of the Week. 1/14/75. 75 minutes. In color. Produced by James Rokos (Danny Thomas Productions). Directed by Satton Roley. Teleplay by William Read Woodfield. With: Kim Novak, Doug McClure, Alejandro Rey, Ed Lauter, Jim Davis, Michael Conrad, Titos Vandis, Zito Kazann, Peter Bourne, Hank Stohl, Tom Dever, Trent Dolan.

Edward Asner and Lloyd Bridges, caught in a stylized vision of Hell in *HAUNTS OF THE VERY RICH*.



Like the recent feature-length documentary released theatrically about *THE DEVIL'S TRIANGLE*, this TV movie emerged as more exploitation than explanation, though the use of Kim Novak's enigmatic smile as a metaphor for the "unfathomable" did border on the inspirational. Less mythic (unless one pines for a reincarnation of a young Van Johnson) was the appearance of the lightweight Doug McClure as the "jaunty" Air Rescue officer who braves rough seas and tornado winds to rescue Miss Novak from a small fishing boat under attack by the strange forces of the Triangle.

More tedious than taut in its fondness for declarative statements ("We're going to die on this boat!"), the project did redeem itself in its closing moments with a rapid turn of events which reaffirm the dangers of dallying in the Devil's playground.

Robert L. Jerome

HAUNTS OF THE VERY RICH Segment of ABC Movie of the Week. 1973. 75 minutes. In color. Produced by Lillian Gallo. Directed by Paul Wendkos. Teleplay by William Wood. With: Lloyd Bridges, Cloris Leachman, Anne Francis, Edward Asner, Tony Bill, Donna Mills, Robert Reed, Moses Gunn.

Hell does not exist several thousand miles below the earth's surface, neither is it like Dante's bizarre descriptions: it exists right here on the earth, within our very lives, and no film has conveyed this thought with such powerful, succinct ambiguity as this Paul Wendkos TV movie.

God only knows how many times the idea has been used of a motley group of people suddenly and mysteriously brought together into an isolated area who, through a certain strange set of experiences come to realize that they are in heaven or Hell. It has been done before in *OUTWARD BOUND* (1930), in its remake *BETWEEN TWO WORLDS* (1944), and numerous times in segments of television's *THE TWILIGHT ZONE*. As a basic piece of material, William Wood's teleplay has little thrust, tempo or ambivalence. It is director Paul Wendkos who gives the film these qualities with an intensity not unlike his *BROTHERHOOD OF THE BELL*, using that film's thin edge of hysteria. Wendkos proves that he can get the very best from actor Lloyd Bridges, bringing out the depth of emotional resource that has been squandered on feeble projects and characters. Cloris Leachman is also superb, with a smooth, clear delineation of character, along with Moses Gunn, Edward Asner, Anne Francis and every other member of the cast. Rarely have TV movies displayed so rich and evocative a visual texture and feeling, and it is Wendkos' triumph that he can do this with such graceful, meaningful facility, transcending the limitations of the medium.

As fantasy, morality play, melodrama, and ambiguous statement of life and death, Paul Wendkos' film is thoroughly extraordinary on every level, and it is the only "Movie of the Week" yet made that merits such distinction. It demands to be seen, or seen again, on its next airing.

Dale Winogura



Gale Sondergaard & Meredith Baxter.

THE CAT CREATURE An ABC Segment of Tuesday Movie of the Week. 12/11/73. 75 minutes. In color. Produced by Douglas S. Cramer (Screen Gems). Directed by Curtis Harrington. Teleplay by Robert Bloch from a story by Cramer. With: Meredith Baxter, David Hedison, Gale Sondergaard, Stuart Whitman, Kent Smith, Milton Parsons, Peter Lorre, Jr., John Carradine.

If *GAMES* can be correctly classified as Curtis Harrington's *DIABOLIQUE* and if the same director's *WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN* can be seen as his attempt at *WHATEVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?*, then this TV movie must be viewed as his homage to *THE CAT PEOPLE*—and a surprisingly effective one considering the limitations imposed on the making of TV's mini-movies. While it may be difficult for the casual viewer to become overly excited about a housecat invested with the homicidal tendencies of a long-dead Egyptian high priestess, the buff could easily relate to that atmosphere, which recalled the glories of the B-movie forties, and the supporting cast of familiar faces from the past—Gale Sondergaard, Kent Smith, Keye Luke, John Carradine—who helped to reinforce the nostalgic vibrations surrounding the shadowy figures in near-deserted locations. (In a nice touch, Kent Smith, who escaped the curse of *THE CAT PEOPLE*, is the first victim to feel the claws of the cat creature.)

Stuart Whitman, as the cop on the case, and David Hedison, as the college professor with a slight knowledge of Egyptology were bland but workmanlike in stock roles, but Meredith Baxter, with her sweet Betty Coed demeanor, registered as lackluster as the Mummy-come-to-life, Zita Johann, where are you now that we need you?

Robert L. Jerome

THE STRANGER WITHIN An ABC Segment of Tuesday Movie of the Week. 10/1/74. 75 minutes. In color. Produced by Neil T. Maffeo (Lorimar Productions). Directed by Lee Phillips. Teleplay by Richard Matheson based on his short story. With: Barbara Eden, George Grizzard, Joyce Van Patten, David Doyle, Nehemiah Persoff.

Richard Matheson's latest teleplay, far from being an oasis in a desert of mediocre made-for-TV spook movies, further confirms my suspicion that originality in *videofantastique* can only be the result of, at best, an accident or superhuman willpower. This film seems so openly derivative that instead of becoming involved in the story, I started making a list of the number of stories and movies it rampantly borrows from: *ROSEMARY'S BABY*, *The Midwich Cuckoos*, *Bradbury's "Small Assassin"*, etc. Then, suddenly, I remembered that I had once read a similar story by Matheson himself called "Mother By Protest," written in 1953 and therefore pre-dating all of the above sources. So, I must apologize to Mr. Matheson for considering him a copy-cat and not paying as much attention as I should have. Even so, I'd still bet my last dollar that the only reason that ABC Movie of the Week chose Matheson's immensely readable old story in the first place was because all of its elements had been tried and found true by others.

Barbara Eden (who is too old for the part, as her uncomfortable closeups glaringly prove) stars as the inexplicably pregnant mother—inexplicably pregnant because her husband had had a vasectomy, or is sterile, or something. Soon she is compulsively drinking boiling black coffee, lapping up pounds of salt, turning the heat off, and reading every book of knowledge she can get her hands on with astonishing swiftness. Her baby, it turns out is a Martian, the result of a wandering seed that found its home while she was out painting a hillside. At first the baby seems to be killing her, but when she tries to abort all her ailments miraculously clear up. In the end, the baby is born, along with a number of other Martian babies, and they all return to the stars, en masse mothers in tow, an unfortunate change from the author's original story where the heroine's child dies, but we are left to speculate how many other seedlings around the globe have actually survived to initiate their conquest of earth. The TV-movie leaves the whole motive for the pregnancy, literally, up in the air.

John McCarty



The model animation effects of LAND OF THE LOST, done with a new economical videotape process.

THE SCREAMING WOMAN An ABC Segment of Movie of the Week. 1/29/72. 75 minutes. In color. Produced by William Frye (Universal Television). Directed by Jack Smight. Teleplay by Merwin Gerard from a story by Ray Bradbury. With: Olivia de Havilland, Joseph Cotten, Walter Pidgeon, Ed Nelson, Laraine Stephens, Charles Robinson, Alexandra Hay, Charles Drake, Joyce Cuning, Ray Montgomery, Gene Andrusco, Jan Arvan, Russell C. Wiggans, John Alderman.

Olivia de Havilland is the woman of the title, and nobody will believe her when she claims to have discovered a woman buried alive. For instance: cop to her son, "You mean your mother was actually talking to the ground?" Of course, Olivia has just spent the past five months in a sanitarium, and even before the film credits roll by, we see her taking off in a sulky for a brisk morning trot.

The sole point of interest in this inept Universal made-for-TV movie is its (perhaps unintentional?) uncommonly harsh, Catherine Genesee-ish view of "just folks" in America. Olivia attempts a door-to-door effort to enlist the neighborhood's help in digging up the poor woman, who is somehow, after all this, still alive. Olivia visits, in turn, 1) the local cop who scoffs again at her pleas; 2) a kid who helps dig for a while, not out of kindness or respect or adventure but a bribe of money; 3) a beer-y old man who is too busy "watchin' football" on TV; 4) the kid's father who takes Olivia's head off for scaring his boy; and 5) an unknown enemy, a real-estate developer whose plans had been opposed by Olivia's lawyers, unbeknownst to her. Finally she winds up, yep, at villain Ed Nelson's place, just as he has finished mopping up a few bloodstains in the living room and washing the dirt off a shovel that he used to bury his wife with. Such a completely negative view of humanity may be more or less accurate, but it is seldom to be found on primetime TV.

Although far from being the worst made-for-TV movie, this film is atrociously lighted and photographed with countless budget-saving zoom shots. Such a film would never be allowed a theatrical release, at least by any self-respecting distributor, even AIP. But for TV, well, TV seems to savor incompetence. Jack Smight, who once before directed Ray Bradbury material in THE ILLUSTRATED MAN (1969), has little to work with here although he must share equally in the blame. And poor Bradbury; once again he has courteously provided the plump lamb for the slaughter.

David Bartholomew

Olivia de Havilland.



LAND OF THE LOST An NBC Weekly Series. Saturday morning. Premiere 9/6/74. Videotape color. 25 minutes. Produced by Sid and Marty Kroft. Directed by Dennis Steinmetz. Story editor, David Gerrold. Teleplays by Gerrold, D. C. Fontana, et. al. Filmed at General Service Studios in Hollywood. With: Spencer Milligan, Kathy Coleman, Wesley Eure, John Lambert, Sharon Baird, Bill Laimbeer, Dave Greenwood, Philip Paley, Joe Giamalva, Walker Edmiston.

This new Sid & Marty Kroft series is typical Saturday morning kiddie fare, with trite acting, lackluster scripting, and dull direction. Story tells of a forest ranger (Spencer Milligan), his teenage son (Wesley Eure) and younger daughter (Kathy Coleman) who discover a lost prehistoric land, inhabited by dinosaurs and other prehistoric creatures of course, and that's where the fun comes in. The prehistoric fauna are created by stop-motion model animation special effects, ably provided by Gene Warren's Excelsior studio, where the Chuchwagon commercials have been produced, along with numerous other TV ads, as well as feature film effects.

Warren is associate producer on the series, and his old friend and close associate from the defunct Project Unlimited, master sculptor and model builder Wah Chang, serves as designer of the animation models being used in the various episodes. Several of Wah's creatures designed for his 1971 educational short DINOSAURS, THE TERRIBLE LIZARDS are incorporated into the show to further enhance the feeling of a time-forgotten universe populated by myriad species of prehistoric life. Animators on the series include Gene Warren, Jr., Peter Kleinow (responsible for a great deal of the animation in the old GUMBY and DAVEY & GOLIATH series) and Harry Walton (who built and animated the "Ugly Bird" in the theatrical feature THE LEGEND OF HILLBILLY JOHN for Excelsior). There will be about 100 minutes of animation for the series, an unbelievable amount when you consider that a theatrical animated feature film such as those produced by Ray Harryhausen contains only ten or fifteen minutes of such footage. A technological breakthrough which makes the process economically feasible for television is the use of videotape instead of film. Compact Video Systems of California developed a special electronic matting system for the series which combines the animated film footage and background plates with the live-action sequences on videotape.

The most interesting episode so far has been titled "Dopey," about the discovery and domestication of a young baby brontosaurus. Some very interesting character work went into the manipulation of the baby dinosaur, a remarkable feat considering the short work schedules necessitated by the limited budget for the series. The episode also featured some fascinating chroma-key composite shots, such as the dinosaur walking with a real girl on its back, very nicely done! David Gerrold, one-time STAR TREK contributor, is story editor on the series, and it would be appreciated by mature fantasy fans if he would exercise some control over the inane aspects of the kiddie-oriented scripts. If the series was even slightly elevated above its third grade intelligence level it might become popular with an older audience and thus assure a steady stream of fantasy on Saturday mornings that could be enjoyed for all the elements of its story and not just its special effects.

Mark Wolf

THE ABDUCTION OF ST. ANNE An ABC Segment of Tuesday Movie of the Week. 1/21/75. 75 minutes. In color. Produced by John Wilder (Quinn Martin Productions). Directed by Harry Falk. Teleplay by Edward Hume based on the novel THE ISSUE OF THE BISHOP'S BLOOD by Thomas Patrick McMahon. Filmed on location in Tucson and Los Angeles and at the Goldwyn Studios in Hollywood. With: Robert Wagner, E. G. Marshall, Lloyd Nolan, Kathleen Quinlan, William Windom, James Gregory, George McCallister, Patrick Con-

way, Roy Jensen.

This has to be one of the flakiest plots for a TV movie yet. An American private eye is hired by the Vatican to kidnap the daughter of a gangster. The reason? She seems to be an authentic, miracle-working saint. She and her father are being held captive by his former right-hand-man, who wants to hold Anne for ransom, to be paid in the coin of the prayers of all the world's Catholics. He expects to die soon and believes he will end in purgatory. The prayers are to get him out, after death. Our cynical atheist detective still has doubts after the climax, even though he sees Anne kneeling in a Baja California church in a nimbus of light, her face, hands and feet marked with the good old stigmata. And the representative of the Vatican witnesses Anne's astral projection cure a dying boy. The movie is fast-paced, well acted and watchable. Its inherent implausibility works against it, but since saints are really no more implausible than vampires (for instance), it isn't hard to sustain disbelief. It's complicated by some unnecessary subplots, but the miracle-working scenes have a certain power which makes up for earlier slack time. Somewhat above average for the medium.

Bill Warren



George Hamilton & Ray Milland.

ORSON WELLES' GREAT MYSTERIES Syndicated by 20th Century-Fox Television. 1974. 26 episodes, 25 minutes. Videotape color. Produced by Anglia Television and Unicorn Films, Inc. Produced by John Jacobs. Directors include Peter Sady and Robert Day. Story supervisor, Donald Wilson. Script editor, John Rosenberg. With: Jenny Hanley, Ian Bannen, Donald Pleasence, Anne Jackson, Dana Wynter, Eli Wallach, Carol Lynley, Joan Collins, Jack Cassidy, Hugh Griffith, Susannah York, Peter Cushing, Victor Buono, Cyril Cusack, Patrick Magee, Dean Stockwell, Joss Ackland, Anna Massey.

Anyone who remembers the old ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS series knows that the 25 minutes actually allotted to the dramatic material in a half hour TV series is not necessarily a handicap in turning out programs with surprise and punch. The producers of this British series, however, have been unable to repeat the success of that earlier series, even though the formula is very similar. Orson Welles is the prestigious host. Dressed in a big floppy hat, magician's cloak and surrounded by fog (or cigar smoke?), he introduces each week's episode based on a classic short story by authors like W. W. Jacobs, Nigel Kneale, and O. Henry—all to the accompaniment of a nice, spooky musical theme by John Barry. And appearing in the plays: Alex McCowen, Peter Cushing, Anne Jackson, and other top notch performers. It all sounds very promising—on paper. Unfortunately, the episodes themselves are mostly sluggish and uninteresting, sometimes even hopelessly amateurish in the production values. The fact that the show is produced on videotape should be no handicap, as witness the fast pace and cinematic cutting offered by the imported MASTERPIECE THEATRE series, yet this show consistently comes across with the ponderousness of a daytime soap opera.

Highpoints of this very uneven show have been "The Monkey's Paw" and "La Grande Breteche." The W. W. Jacobs story has certainly been done to death, but here was saved by the superb performance of Cyril Cusack as the distraught father who uses the third wish of the monkey's paw to spare his wife from seeing the mangled remains of their resurrected son. "La Grande Breteche" offered Peter Cushing (at his villainous best) as the sadistic master of a huge chateau who torments his wife (Susannah York) by walling up her lover. Series lowpoints have been Wilkie Collins' "A Terribly Strange Bed" and Stanley Ellin's "Death of an Old-Fashioned Girl," with Edward Albert and Carol Lynley, respectively, giving their customary dismal performances. Ratings-wise, the series is dying all across the country. Too bad. The potential was there!

John McCarty

Susannah York and Peter Cushing in ORSON WELLES' GREAT MYSTERIES, a syndicated series.



FILM RATINGS

FILM RATINGS

THE RATINGS

++++ High +++
 +++ Average ++
 ++ Low +
 +
 0
 -
 --

TOP RATED FILMS

THE CONVERSATION (3.6)
 AMARCORD (3.2)
 MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS (2.7)
 YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN (2.7)
 THE STEPFORD WIVES (2.5)
 BLOOD FOR DRACULA (2.2)
 THE PARALLAX VIEW (2.1)

Only films seen by four or more participants are given an average rating. Of 72 films currently in release, only seven listed above received an average rating of +2.0 or better.

THE RATERS

BW = Bill Warren
 DB = David Bartholomew
 DRS = Dan R. Scapperotti
 DW = Dale Winogura
 FSC = Frederick S. Clarke
 JM = John McCarty
 RLJ = Robert L. Jerome
 TL = Tim Lucas
 Av. = Average Rating

ABBY
 "Lots of Colonel Sanders fried chicken and Steppin Fetchit acting. The wife of a black minister in Louisville, Kentucky is possessed by the devil until the impressive William Marshall exorcizes her in a bar. Often hysterical, never effective." (TL, -3)

"An obnoxious rip-off of THE EXORCIST. The only interesting point, and this strictly unintentional since the possession is expressed only in terms of sexual innuendo, this film speaks volumes about its male makers' deathly fear of unleashed female sexuality." (DB, -3)

ANGEL ABOVE - THE DEVIL BELOW
 "The Devil possesses a beautiful girl's vagina in this dumb, inane, hardcore porno film, a sloppy, inept spoof of THE EXORCIST with more pussy shots than the eye can stand." (DW, -3)

THE APPLE WAR
 "Witches and giants destroy profiteers in this one-dimensional Swedish parable. Pleasantly trivial to the point of boredom." (DW, -3)

DEEP THROAT - PART II
 "A talking computer is the science fiction element in this boring spy spoof. Confusing and pointless." (DW, -4)

DEVIL'S NIGHTMARE
 "Waylaid bus of fools meets sexy succubus (Erika Blanc) dressed in a fetching black number from Frederick's cut to display a marvelously flat tummy. Belgian-Italian." (DB, -1)

DOC SAVAGE
 "Rough cut shown at theatre preview will be trimmed and cut. Disarming, beguiling, charming and friendly fun with a capital F. Ely is fabulous. It may be coy and naive, but it works like a charm." (DW, -3)

EARTHQUAKE
 "Well-done disaster film with the addition of 'Sensurround.' The earthquake sequences are especially effective. The acting, unfortunately, is another story." (DRS, -2)

THE GREEN HORNET
 "Ah, sweet memory! I must have been younger than I thought when I originally saw these episodes on TV. On a wide screen the shows are hopelessly hammy and quite laughable. Poor Van Williams. The former star of the show

FILM TITLE	BW	DB	DRS	DW	FSC	JM	RLJ	TL	Av.
ABBY (William Girlder) AIP, 12/74, 92 minutes, color	--	---	--	-	---	-	+	---	-2.0
ABDUCTION OF ST. ANNE, THE (Harry Falk) ABC-TV, 1/75, 78 minutes, color	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
AMARCORD (Federico Fellini) New World, 9/74, 127 minutes, color	-	----	-	---	-	---	-	---	-3.2
ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN (Paul Morrissey) Bryanston, 6/74, 95 minutes, color, scope & 3-D	--	0	0+	----	---	----	+	---	-0.2
ANGEL ABOVE - THE DEVIL BELOW (Dominic Bolla) Martoni Ent, 12/74, 82 minutes, color	-	-	-	---	-	-	-	-	-
APPLE WAR, THE (Tage Danielsson) Film Group, 1/75, 102 minutes, color	-	-	-	---	-	-	-	-	-
ARNOLD (Georg Fenady) Cinerama, 4/74, 94 minutes, color	+	-	-	----	-	----	0	++	-1.0
BAT PEOPLE, THE (Jerry Jameson) AIP, 3/74, 94 minutes, color	-	0	0	-	---	-	0	++	-1.0
BEAST MUST DIE, THE (Paul Annett) Cinerama, 4/74, 93 minutes, color & scope	+	-	-	---	0	-	-	++	-0.2
BLOOD FOR DRACULA (Paul Morrissey) Bryanston, 8/74, 90 minutes, color	---	++	-	0	++	++	-	----	-2.2
BLOOD SPATTERED BRIDE (Vicente Aranda) Europix Int'l, 4/74, 83 minutes, color	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CAPTAIN KRONOS: VAMPIRE HUNTER (Brian Clemens) Paramount, 6/74, 91 minutes, color	++	+	-	++	++	++	-	---	-1.9
CASTLE OF FU MANCHU, THE (Jess Franco) Int'l Cinema Corp, 8/74, 81 minutes, color	----	---	0	-	-	-	-	-	-1.8
CHOSEN SURVIVORS (Sutton Roley) Columbia, 5/74, 99 minutes, color	-	+	-	0	---	0	+	---	-1.0
CONVERSATION, THE (Francis Ford Coppola) Paramount, 4/74, 113 minutes, color	----	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-3.6
DARK PLACES (Don Sharp) Cinerama, 5/74, 91 minutes, color	-	0	-	0	-	-	-	-	-
DARK STAR (John Carpenter) Bryanston, 1/75, 83 minutes, color	---	+	-	++	-	-	-	-	-
DEAD DON'T DIE, THE (Curtis Harrington) NBC-TV, 1/75, 72 minutes, color	0	-	0	-	0	----	-	-	-1.0
DEEP THROAT - PART II (Joe Sarno) Damiano Films, 12/74, 95 minutes, color	-	-	-	---	-	-	-	-	-
DERANGED (Jeff Gillen & Alan Ormsby) AIP, 5/74, 82 minutes, color	+	0	-	-	++	-	-	-	+0.5
DEVIL'S NIGHTMARE (Jean Brismee) Hemisphere, 6/74, 87 minutes, color	---	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-1.0
DEVIL'S TRIANGLE (Richard Winer) UFO Dist Co, 10/74, 52 minutes, color	---	-	-	0	----	-	-	-	-1.8
DIGBY, THE BIGGEST DOG IN THE WORLD (Joseph McGrath) Cinerama, 6/74, 88 minutes, color	++	++	-	+	++	+	+	+	-1.4
EARTHQUAKE (Mark Robson) Universal, 11/74, 123 minutes, color, scope & Sensurround	---	+	++	---	++	+	+	---	-1.2
FEMALE TROUBLE (John Waters) New Line, 2/75, 95 minutes, color	-	++	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FLESH GORDON (Michael Benveniste & Howard Ziehm) Mammoth, 7/74, 82 minutes, color	--	-	---	0	---	+	-	-	-0.7
FRANKENSTEIN AND THE MONSTER FROM HELL (Fisher) Paramount, 6/74, 93 minutes, color	-	-	0	0	0	--	-	++	-0.3
GOLDEN NEEDLES (Robert Clouse) AIP, 7/74, 90 minutes, color & scope	0	+	++	+	-	-	+	-	+1.0
GREEN HORNET, THE (Norman Foster, et. al.) 20th Fox, 1/75, 90 minutes, color	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	+	-
GROOVE TUBE, THE (Ken Shapiro) Levitt-Pickman, 6/74, 71 minutes, color	-	0	0	+	-	-	++	---	-1.2
HERBIE RIDES AGAIN (Robert Stevenson) Buena Vista, 7/74, 90 minutes, color	+	-	++	----	-	-	-	++	+0.3
HORRIBLE HOUSE ON THE HILL (Sean MacGregor) Barrister, 8/74, 90 minutes, color	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	----	-
INTERNECINE PROJECT, THE (Ken Hughes) Allied Artists, 7/74, 90 minutes, color	-	+	0	+	0	-	-	++	-0.8
IN THE DEVIL'S GARDEN (Sidney Hayers) Hemisphere, 3/74, 90 minutes, color	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0.2
ISLAND AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD (Robert Stevenson) Buena Vista, 10/74, 93 minutes, color	-	-	0	++	-	-	-	-	-0.2
KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER (Cy Chermak, Producer) ABC-TV Series, 8:00 EDT Friday, 52 minutes, color	++	0	-	-	++	++	++	---	-1.7

FILM RATINGS

FILM RATING

FILM TITLE	BW	DB	DRS	DW	FSC	JM	RLJ	TL	Av.
LAND THAT TIME FORGOT, THE (Kevin Connor) AIP, 1/75, 91 minutes, color	.	o	o						
LAST DAYS OF MAN ON EARTH (Robert Fuest) New World, 8/74, 78 minutes, color		++						++++	
LITTLE PRINCE, THE (Stanley Donen) Paramount, 11/74, 88 minutes, color	++	o		.	++		++		+1.4
LORD SHANGO (Raymond Marsh) Bryanston, 2/75, 87 minutes, color					o				
MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR, THE (The Beatles) Carson Ent Grp, 1/75, 53 minutes, color 16mm								++++	
MAHLER (Ken Russell) Mayfair Film Grp, 1/75, 114 minutes, color		++		+++					
MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN, THE (Guy Hamilton) United Artists, 12/74, 125 minutes, color		o	o	---	.	.	.	.	-0.1
MEMORIES WITHIN MISS AGGIE (Gerard Damiano) Inish Kae Ltd, 7/74, 74 minutes, color			.	o	++		.		+1.0
MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS (Sidney Lumet) Paramount, 12/74, 128 minutes, color	++	++	+++	+++	+++	++			+2.7
MUTATIONS, THE (Jack Cardiff) Columbia, 6/74, 91 minutes, color	.	.	.	.	--	--	o	---	-0.6
MYSTERIOUS ISLAND OF CAPTAIN NEMO (Colpi & Bardem) Cinerama, 6/74, 98 minutes, color			o	---	++		o		-0.5
NIGHT PORTER, THE (Liliana Cavani) Avco-Embassy, 10/74, 117 minutes, color		++	o	---				+++	+0.6
NINE LIVES OF FRITZ THE CAT, THE (Robert Taylor) AIP, 6/74, 76 minutes, color		o	o	---	++		o	.	0.0
PARALLAX VIEW, THE (Alan J. Pakula) Paramount, 6/74, 103 minutes, color & scope	+++	++	++	++++	.	+++	.	+++	+2.1
PHANTOM OF LIBERTE, THE (Luis Bunuel) 20th Fox, 12/74, 104 minutes, color		+++		+++					
PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE (Brian De Palma) 20th Fox, 12/74, 91 minutes, color	++++	++		.	o	++	++	+++	+1.7
PHASE IV (Saul Bass) Paramount, 8/74, 91 minutes, color & scope	o	++			o	.	++	+++	+1.0
PINK FLAMINGOS (John Waters) Saliva Films, 12/74, 75 minutes, color 16mm				---			.		
SATAN'S TRIANGLE (Sutton Roley) ABC-TV, 1/75, 72 minutes, color							o	.	
SEIZURE (Oliver Stone) Cinerama, 11/74, 93 minutes, color	.				++++				
SHANKS (William Castle) Paramount, 10/74, 93 minutes, color		o	.	.				+++	+0.2
SPECTRE OF EDGAR ALLAN POE, THE (Mohy Quandor) Cinerama, 4/74, 87 minutes, color	---	--							
SPIRIT OF THE BEEHIVE (Victor Erice) Elias Querejeta, 11/74, 95 minutes, color	.	+++							
STEPFORD WIVES, THE (Bryan Forbes) Columbia, 2/75, 115 minutes, color	++	++	++	++++	++++	.			+2.5
STEPPEWOLF (Fred Haines) Haines, 8/74, 120 minutes, color, scope & Dolby sound		.		--					
STRANGER WITHIN, THE (John Moxey) ABC-TV, 10/74, 72 minutes, color	o			.		---	o		-0.2
STRONGEST MAN IN THE WORLD, THE (Vincent McEveety) Buena Vista, 1/75, 91 minutes, color			o						
TERMINAL MAN, THE (Mike Hodges) Warner Bros, 6/74, 107 minutes, color	--	++		++	++	.	.		+1.0
TORSO (Sergio Martino) Jos Brenner, 2/75, 89 minutes, color									
TRIAL OF BILLY JACK, THE (Frank Laughlin) Taylor-Laughlin, 11/74, 165 minutes, color & scope	o	.	o	.	----		--	----	-1.8
TRIO INFERNAL, LE (Francis Girod) Levitt-Pickman, 11/74, 106 minutes, color & scope		++			++				
VAMPIRES (Joseph Larraz) Cambist, 1/75, 87 minutes, color								o	
VOODOO BLACK EXORCIST (M. Cano) Horizon, 7/74, 90 minutes, color & scope					--				
W (Richard Quine) Cinerama, 6/74, 95 minutes, color	o	.	.	.				++	+0.2
WINNIE THE POOH AND TIGGER TOO (John Lounsbery) Buena Vista, 12/74, 25 minutes, color		o	o	o	+++	o	.	++	+0.8
YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN (Mel Brooks) 20th Fox, 12/74, 105 minutes, black & white & plywood	++++	o		+++	++++	++		+++	+2.7

now gets second billing to a dead cult hero." (TL, -1)

THE INTERNECINE PROJECT

"This falls into the 'clever' suspense thriller category, but use of gadgetry, including a miniaturized sonic death ray, makes it borderline science fiction. Has PSYCHO-like shower scene, clever ending." (Bbob Stewart, +1)

IN THE DEVIL'S GARDEN

"Fair mystery. Horror element extremely minimal." (BW, 0)
"Standard psycho-rapist tale, nice cast, British (Rank)." (DB, 0)
"For those who wish to know what happened to director Sidney Hayers after BURN, WITCH, BURN. Nothing." (FSC, 0)

THE LAND THAT TIME FORGOT

"Sometimes the script isn't bad at all, but there's the all-too-common here (Doug McClure here, not Charlton Heston) and a volcanic eruption at the end, both of which could have easily been avoided. Effects are rotten most of the time. Good front screen work and good design." (BW, -1)

LORD SHANGO

"Attempts to define the black mystical experience, a step in the right direction for black horror films perhaps, but this one is about as exciting as a Southern Baptist prayer meeting" (FSC, 0)

THE MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR

"Actually directed by The Beatles, and originally released to the BBC in 1968, this film is nearly devastating in its capture of The Dream Essence, intense surrealism, and Lestersque comedy. Fellini influenced photography by Ringo Starr." (TL, -3)

MAHLER

"An extravagant musical biography of the great composer, blending fantasy and reality with usual Russell power and decadence." (DW, -3)

PINK FLAMINGOS

"A new dimension in the sick-surrealist cinema. Utterly worthless satire, sloppily made and forced, but Divine, a huge transvestite, is not bad." (DW, -4)

SPIRIT OF THE BEEHIVE

"A brilliant, multi-layered study of movies, childhood, perception, and James Whale's FRANKENSTEIN. Spain, 1973." (DB, -3)

THE STEPFORD WIVES

"A masterpiece! Slightly flawed horror allegory, an overwhelming emotional and aesthetic experience. One of the all-time great genre films, far superior structurally to ROSEMARY'S BABY. See it without delay!" (DW, -4)
"Some beautiful atmospheric photography by Owen Roizman. Unfortunately, the audience is always two steps ahead of the plot." (JM, -1)

STEPPEWOLF

"Some stunning color videotape effects and a very good performance by Von Sydow in a tedious, pretentious, philosophic, psychedelic mishmash. Hesse reduced to vulgar pictorialism and banalities." (DW, -2)

STRONGEST MAN IN THE WORLD

"Routine sequel to the 1970 COMPUTER WORE TENNIS SHOES with Russell Flynn and Romero reprising their roles. Amusing family entertainment with none of the spectacular special effects or comedy chases one would expect." (DRS, 0)

TORSO

"Suzy Kendall and three other busty co-eds are terrorized in a holiday mansion in Italy by a hacksaw murderer. Some neat, well-executed suspense sequences. Definitely one of the better films of the 'maniac' genre, but is that saying a hell of a lot? Very graphic." (TL, -1)

THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK

"A ludicrous, pop-surrealistic, mystical experience inhabits this messy potpourri of mangled ideas." (DW, 0)

VAMPIRES

"Highly violent and nearly erotic X-rated lesbian vampire film, made in England. Fangless girls hitch rides to their castle and lure their chauffeurs inside for indulgent blood orgies. Would have been very effective if the dialogue were realistic, if continuity existed, because the scenes of bloodshed are intense and gripping. Worth a look." (TL, 0)

VOODOO BLACK EXORCIST

"A Spanish film shot in Haiti, Jamaica and Santa Domingo, about a centuries old West Indian mummy resurrected to seek out the reincarnation of his long lost love. A powerful and somewhat haunting choral musical arrangement reprised during frequent flashback sequences becomes unintentionally funny. By the end of the film you find yourself humming it like some giggling TV jingle you'd sooner forget. Only for completists." (FSC, -2)

WINNIE THE POOH AND TIGGER TOO

"Average. Only noteworthy device here is that this entire cartoon is an animated storybook, complete with dialogue and narration about 'pages.' Backgrounds nicely done in Eugene Shepherd style." (Bbob Stewart, 0)

NEWS AND NOTES

SENSE OF WONDER

Welcome to the thirteenth issue of CINEFANTASTIQUE (sin-eh-faun-tass-teek'), the magazine with a "sense of wonder," devoted to the examination of horror, fantasy and science fiction in the cinema.

A great deal of *cinefantastique* of the last few years has been light and humorous, and this has marked a truly unique trend among the modern genre films. In the past, horror, fantasy and science fiction films have used comedy and humor, but have always been careful to keep its usage segregated from the outlook of the work as a whole. Thus James Whale frequently injects humor into his horror films (THE INVISIBLE MAN and BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN), George Pal uses comedy in his screen fantasies (TOM THUMB and THE 7 FACES OF DR. LAO), and Stanley Kubrick has even managed to inject humor into so solemn a work of science fiction as 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY. In the past, the use of comedy in the genre has been functional, to draw naturally upon the inherent humor of a given situation without changing the orientation of the film on the whole as a work of horror, fantasy or science fiction. The genre film is rare that does not feature this "organic" use of comedy. However, recent genre films have used increasingly another form of humor which has come to predominate. This humor is not "organic," but derives from mocking or exaggerating those elements which define the work as horror, fantasy or science fiction. This is satire or parody, a legitimate, sometimes even worthwhile, form of humor. But it is important to draw the distinction that a parody of something is not the thing itself. This distinction is becoming increasingly difficult to make with current genre films because parody and satire are being overused promiscuously. Getting a laugh at the expense of the genre film cliché has become an easy, cheap way out for many modern filmmakers, who lack the vision, talent and cinematic dexterity to restate the elements of the genre film in a fresh and meaningful way for modern audiences. Thus it is important to keep in perspective the achievements of recent genre films like ANDY

WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN, FLESH GORDON, PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE, YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN, etc., etc., etc. Laugh, enjoy them, but don't be deluded that they represent a new direction for *cinefantastique* in the seventies. These satires, parodies and self-parodies represent a stagnating backwater, a trendy quirk in the development of *cinefantastique* in the seventies that leads to a dead-end. It is in serious films such as William Friedkin's THE EXORCIST and THE STEPFORD WIVES, Bryan Forbes' powerful new work of science fiction, that the elements of *cinefantastique* continue to evolve in meaningful ways for a contemporary audience.

In this issue we offer a new insight into one of the most controversial and influential of modern horror films. In "Anatomy of a Horror Film," Gary Anthony Surmacz conducts a round-table discussion with producers Karl Hardman and Russell Streiner, and screenwriter John Russo about the making, and the unmaking of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD. The frank, casual, off-the-cuff conversation delves into the mechanics of how an independent horror film comes to be made and released. What emerges from the discussion is that NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD became a success more by accident than design. Says producer Hardman: "The longer this film stays in distribution and the more I hear about this cult and that cult, the more astounded I become that we made this film." Totally devoid of pretensions, the three filmmakers as a group deny that the symbolism often read into the film was ever intended by anyone involved in its production. They credit their honest, serious approach to scaring an audience for the success which the film has enjoyed. Accompanying the interviews is an "Appreciation" of the film written by Stuart M. Kaminsky, which analyzes the film's impact on an audience in its context as being a work of horror and science fiction. Kaminsky concludes that NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD is highly symbolic, whether it is intended to be or not. Your appreciation of this feature may be enhanced by re-reading the interview with George Romero, the director of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, published in our Vol 3 No 2 issue.

Steve Rubin provides our Retrospect this issue, devoted to FORBIDDEN PLANET, one of the most popular and respected science fiction films of all time. In a lengthy article, Rubin traces the film's production at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in the mid-fifties from initial story concept to final musical scoring and release. In talking to virtually all surviving members of the film's production crew and many of its actors Rubin provides the most detailed and fascinating production history of the film ever presented, utilizing reproductions of actual pre-production sketches and paintings and many behind the scenes photographs which detail the film's unique achievements in art direction and special effects design. Even today, FORBIDDEN PLANET is rarely matched in its scope, beauty and boundless imagination.

To enhance your appreciation of the current re-release of another key work of science fiction, we present Tonda Marton's short critical essay "2001: Film Poetry," which explores the unique achievement of Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY, its poetic sense of wonder. And our English correspondent, Chris Knight, talks to actor Christopher Lee about the recent good fortune in his acting career which appears to have finally progressed beyond the stage of horror film type-casting. Lee currently appears as the stylish screen villain Scaramanga in the new James Bond film THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN, and is featured on our front cover.

BIBLIO- FANTASTIQUE

If "unmasked" in the title of Vincent Price Unmasked by James Robert Parish and Steven Whitney (Drake Publishers, Inc., New York, 1974, 266 pages, \$9.95 hardcover) promises an expose of closeted family skeletons and personal aberrations the authors don't give it to us. Which is just as well since there probably aren't any, and even if there were, the seamy side of show business gets enough publicity anyway. What the authors have compiled is primarily a professional biography covering 140 typo-ridden pages of Vincent Price's life to date.

The treatment is mostly factual (read dry) and sympathetic. While frequently mentioning Mr. Price's good humor the authors show little of their own. If you've read Price's books, I Like What I Know and The Book of Joe, read articles about him, and seen his numerous appearances on talk shows, this book won't give you much in the line of anecdotes or facts you haven't heard before. What you may have forgotten this book can remind you, however.

Following the biography section, there is a hundred page filmography listing of the actor's work with fairly complete cast and credits, and sections devoted to television, radio and Broadway theatrical appearances. There are 24 pages of photos, covering 1937-1974.

The book is not a great definitive biography. It is more or less factual. It doesn't shoot barbs at its subject which is refreshing. It is primarily a research effort. A little new journalism, and even a new and different interview might have helped. The authors apparently never even met their subject.

J. M. Wiedman

Richard Anobile, who has previously edited interesting and unique volumes on Abbott and Costello and W. C. Fields has begun what is purported to be a series of books called The Film Classics Library. Each volume is to cover an individual film, leading off with James Whale's Frankenstein (Avon Books, New York, 1974, 256 pages, \$4.95 softcover). Although this film has been covered so often there would seem to be little room for originality left, Anobile has produced something truly worthwhile by putting the film on paper through the use of hundreds of actual frame blowups accompanied by the actual dialogue.

His introduction briefly recounts the generally well-known production circumstances which led to the film being made at Universal. Of interest is Anobile's conclusion that director James Whale's contribution to the success of the film is vastly overrated. Anobile calls Whale's work on the film "primitive at best" and not exhibiting "a good knowledge of screen direction or film technique," and calls the film a classic "in spite of James Whale." Anobile credits the film's success largely to the performance of Boris Karloff, and his pictorially impressive book offers many shots of the monster which bring out Karloff's interpretation of the bewildered creature which conventional stills have been unable to do. As these are pictorials, it is hoped that future volumes of The Film Classics Library will deal with films that are visually exciting such as KING KONG rather than the Bogart-type films which have been promised.

Dan Scapperotti

With the publication of Volume 3 which finishes up the alphabet from P to Z, Walt Lee concludes his monumental Reference Guide to Fantastic Films (Chelsea-Lee Books, Los Angeles, 1974, 559 pages, \$10.50 softcover). It's an amazing work, really, beyond description and praise (particularly when one realizes it was done without benefit of automatic data processing), and like all essential reference tools on marginal subjects, it seems the product of a completely driven, inner-directed freak willing to devote most of his life to his work, much to the head-shaking disbelief of family, friends, etc. Lee's third volume features a strange post-Watergate-morale introduction by Robert Bloch in which he slides from praise of Lee to wholesale condemnation of present-day movie audiences ("apes") and the explicitness of nearly all modern films, complaints that similarly drifted in and out of Ray Harryhausen's Fantasy Film Scrapbook. There are enough entries in the "Problems" section (films that Lee has not satisfactorily identified as to their fantasy content) in all three volumes to keep the buffs and critics' letters pouring in, which Lee heartily encourages. The only thing needed now to make Lee's work absolutely useful is a volume that breaks down the entries into individual filmographies, an idea which Lee indicated to me nearly a year ago he was trying to interest publisher Scarecrow Press in doing. I wouldn't put it past him. To show how indefatigable Walt Lee is, in his "Acknowledgements" section, after noting the amount of work involved in, and years spent on, this project, in the next paragraph he begins talking about a second edition of international scope...

We have come to expect zero value, apart from visuals, in large-format film books. Dulan Barber's Monsters Who's Who, however, cheerfully puts some information between its pictures. The volume is an A to Z manual of dinosaurs and creatures from mythology, literature, TV, films and comics. The latter section, which explores what could with a little care become our own modern mythology of Marvelous figures (all of them a collective ode to the suspected transformative powers of gamma rays) is useful at least to an old comics fan who hasn't had the time to keep up. Several of Barber's writeups are very good, like the one on giants, the Loch Ness monster, sea serpents, vampires and yeti. Several deal with creatures unfamiliar to non-Britons, like the Cyberman and Ice Warriors from the Dr. Who TV series. For the most part, however, the entries are dryly written; Barber suffers an addiction for the word "ugly," and I don't think he knows as much about American genre films as he thinks he does, cf. CAPTIVE WILD WOMAN and MONSTER THAT CHALLENGED THE WORLD. The book is cheaply produced (for some odd reason Barber does not even get his name on the title page), there are hideous errors of punctuation, and the layout of illustrations is occasionally sloppy. Two photos distinguish the volume's collection: one, a head shot of Lee in THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN and the other, a shot of the Pangboe scalp, supposedly from a yeti. Everyone will quibble with Barber's choice of subjects, although the book is more complete and worthwhile than a similar book, Thomas Aylesworth's juvenile Monsters From the Movies. I for one miss the radioactive goos (THE H-MAN, X, THE UNKNOWN, etc.), and almost everything from Toho save Godzilla is ignored. The best thing about the book is that almost immediately after its U.S. edition was published, it wound up in the remainders stores (Marbor, etc.) at better than half its original price.

David Bartholomew

The most interesting, and some might say the only interesting aspect of *THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN*, the newest picture in the James Bond series, is Christopher Lee's performance as Scaramanga, a million-dollar hit man who kills with a golden bullet. I visited Lee at Pinewood studios last July while work on the film was in progress. He looked fit after a strenuous stint of location shooting in the far east, and in good spirits. We discussed in his dressing room his work on the film and the recent good fortune his career has enjoyed. Lee was offered the part of Scaramanga by director Guy Hamilton over lunch at London's White Elephant and accepted after reading the script that same afternoon. He calls the character a "contre-Bond," an anti-hero of great stature able to deal with the famous secret agent on an equal footing. Lee admitted laughingly: "It's amusing to me that finally I shall be playing in a James Bond film due to the fact that Ian Fleming was my cousin and always said I ought to be in them!"

CFQ: Were you recognized and accepted as a star in Bangkok and the far east where this film was shot?

LEE: I've now, thank God, reached a point in my career where there isn't a country I can go to where I'm not recognized. They had all seen my films—well, not all of them, fortunately for that, but a great many of them. Everybody knew me, simply because I've been in pictures that have been world-wide successes, and it's getting even more so with pictures like *THE THREE MUSKETEERS* and this film. It should be even more so with this film because, thank God, for once I do look like myself. I even take off my clothes, which is something I never thought I'd have to do in a film! As you probably know, I have a third nipple. It's in the book.

CFQ: Did you pattern your performance as Scaramanga on the Ian Fleming book?

LEE: No. The character in the book is a great ox of a man. He's really just a thug. He has no charm at all. He's extremely unpleasant. He's just a thug who kills with a golden gun, and there is nothing more to him than that. In fact, it's one of the least well-written characters of all Fleming's books. The way the character comes out in the script is infinitely superior, infinitely.

CFQ: What's it been like to work on a Bond picture?

LEE: The thing that impressed me most on this picture is the tremendous level of production, which is quite staggering. Even after *THE THREE MUSKETEERS*, which was a super, star-studded, colossal sort of thing, I've never seen anything like this. Money is, literally, no object. I have never seen money spent as it has been on this picture. It's because it's the only film that's made today in the cinema which is an absolute, 100% certainty before they even make it. They know it's going to make millions, it's going to make huge profits, so they don't mind. So it's wonderful to work in a picture where this occurs because there is never any question of can we afford this, should we spend a bit more time there, and pay for this and pay for that—do it! You have a free hand. It's *carte blanche*.

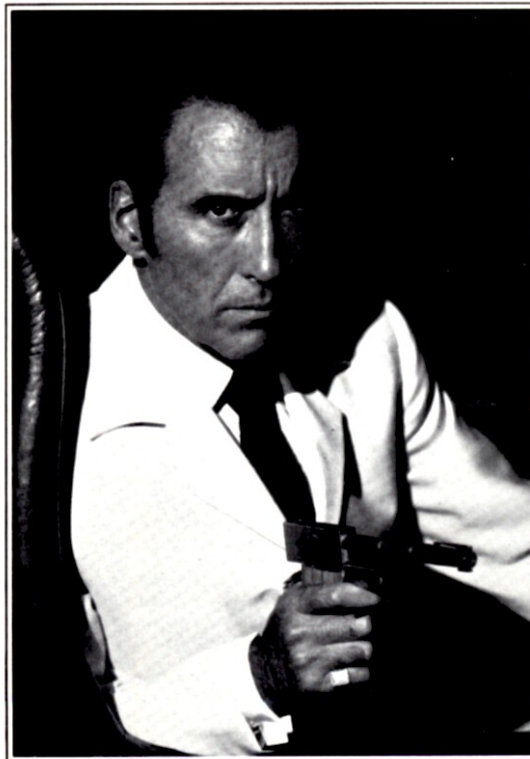
That has got to come over on the screen, because of the exotic backgrounds, the incredible sets, plus the fact that, for probably the first time in a Bond film, the people in this picture are people and not card-board cut-outs or caricatures. They may be a bit bizarre, but at least they are believable.

The other thing that impressed me is the wonderful good humor of Roger Bond, as I call him, or Roger Moore. He's tremendous fun to work with. It's twenty-six years since I worked with Roger in a film. I did *IVANHOE* with him, one of the television shows, but twenty-six years ago I did *TROTTIE TRUE* in the gardens of this studio and he and I were stage-door Johnnies with one line each.

And the director, whom I've known for many, many years, I've never worked for as an actor, but Guy Hamilton got something out of me in this picture which I've never been able to show on the screen. In his own words, he got the spook out of me. He got the Dracula out of me. Because, obviously, I can become very menacing, rather heavy, if I'm not careful, even with ordinary lines, because I've done it so often. And he's getting me to do this picture in such a light way that you can hardly believe this man is as lethal as he is. He's getting me to smile. He's getting me to laugh, which I must admit, I don't find very easy to do as an actor. But he's getting the lightness of performance out of me, the contrasts. This man

THE VAMPIRE WITH THE GOLDEN GUN

"Guy Hamilton got something out of me in this picture which I've never been able to show on the screen. In his own words, he got the spook out of me. He got the Dracula out of me."



**CHRIS KNIGHT
INTERVIEWS
CHRISTOPHER LEE**

isn't just a straight, down-the-middle, conventional heavy. He's got things out of me that no other director has ever either had to get or wanted to get, or even tried to get.

CFQ: Are there any of the other Bond villains you would have liked to have played?

LEE: Oh yes, the first one. The first one was modeled on Fu Manchu. I know that because the author told me. I would have liked to have played Dr. No, but I think if I had played it, having seen that a very fine actor could make nothing out of it by virtue of the story, the direction, or whatever, it's probably just as well I didn't. Dr. No is a conventional, emotionless, straight-faced heavy. Wiseman was a marvelous actor. He wasn't able to do anything because he wasn't required to.

The best Bond heavy, of course, unquestionably, is Goldfinger. Not only because it was a very well-written part, and a very interesting and entertaining role, but because Gert Frobe played it beautifully.

If the producers decide that Scaramanga is too good a character to lose, they'll bring him back. It's always possible to bring people back, as I know only too well, to my sorrow.

CFQ: Do you feel this film is going to be a peak in your career?

LEE: No. Certainly not. I think it's going to do something immensely important in my career. What is the peak of your career? Is it the best picture you've ever been in? Is it the best part you've ever played? Is it the most successful picture or is it the best performance you ever give? The peak of your career could be your last film, after which you just quietly fade away at the age of eighty or ninety. That could be your peak. It's something you can't possibly foretell.

I would say it's certainly the film, with the exception of *THE THREE MUSKETEERS*, in which I will get the greatest exposure. In terms of changing what is laughably called an image, which really isn't an accurate one, it will be of immense value to me. I did the last Dracula two years ago and as you know I don't intend to do it again. I've done no horror pictures since then, not really. *HORROR EXPRESS* is not a horror film, certainly not for me. Since then I've done *THE WICKER MAN*, which is superior in many respects, *THE THREE MUSKETEERS*, a huge, big picture, which is going to make a vast amount of money, and now this.

You could say that the beginning of a new career for me as an actor began with *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*, and steadily that particular diversification broadened out from that point. This means that because of the level at which I am established as an actor, and the exposure I'm getting from films that are certainly going to make a lot of money, I'm obviously going to be offered an enormous amount of pictures now of a different type. I'll always be the villain. I'll always be the heavy. This doesn't bother me one bit as I've said many times because they're always the best parts, the most interesting, the ones you remember, and the greatest fun to play.

It's not a question of being a success like Karloff or Lugosi or Chaney, although I don't necessarily put myself in that category. It would be more important to be a success like a Rathbone, or Rains, or Veidt, which I'm now doing. I think I'm combining in the kind of parts that I'm playing the two areas in which these great actors worked. Not just a graveyard epic, but a thriller as well as an action/adventure type of picture in which one may well be playing the villain of the piece. It doesn't mean to say that I will never do another horror film. It does mean to say that hopefully they will all be good if I am going to do them, and that I won't do any more indifferent ones. If I do get offered a horror picture, it's got to be a damned good picture and a damned good part.

That Lee's interest in horror films is still keen is evidenced by the fact that a co-production arrangement is now pending between Hammer Films and his own Charlemagne company to film Dennis Wheatley's *TO THE DEVIL A DAUGHTER* in which he would star. Lee owns the screen rights to all of the occult novels of Dennis Wheatley and feels that the chemistry which worked superbly well in "the great days of Hammer" can work well again. "They need some successful films," he pointed out, referring to financial problems at the once thriving horror film studio. But while the sun may be setting on the career of Hammer Films, Christopher Lee's star is newly rising. His performance as Scaramanga in *THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN* is among the best work he has done: stylish screen villainy.

kolchak: the night stalker

The most unlikely heir to Dr. Van Helsing that one could imagine.

KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER An ABC Television Series. Friday nights, 8:00 EDT. Premiered 9/13/74. 52 minutes. In Color. Produced by Paul Playdon and Cy Chermak (Universal Television). Created by Jeff Rice. Story consultant, David Chase. Contributing writers: Bill S. Ballinger, Rudolph Borchert, Dennis Clark, Robert Earl, Steve Fisher, Al Friedman, Bob Gale, John Huff, Norman Liebman, Larry Markes, Zekial Marko, Tim Maschler, Donn Mullally, L. Ford Neale, Paul Playdon, Arthur Rowe, Jimmy Sangster, Bill Stratton, Robert Zemeckis. Contributing directors: Allen Baron, Michael Caffey, Alex Grasshoff, Gordon Hessler, Bruce Kessler, Gene Levitt, Robert Scheerer, Don Weis. Director of photography, John Gaudiso. Art director, Raymond Beal. Set decorator, Robert Freer. Sound, John Kean. Edited by Robert Leeds. Main title designed by Jack Cole.

Carl Kolchak Darren McGavin
Tony Vincenzo Simon Oakland
Ron Updyke Jack Grinnage
Emily Cowles Ruth McDevitt

Guest Stars

Julie Adams	Milt Kamen
Charles Aidman	John Marley
Frank Aletter	Arthur Metrano
Maureen Arthur	Corrine Michaels
Jim Backus	Marvin Miller
Val Bisoglio	Kathleen Nolan
Suzanne Charney	J. Pat O'Malley
William Daniels	Lara Parker
Severn Darden	Dick Van Patten
Antonio Fargas	Benny Rubin
John Fiedler	Phil Silvers
Nina Foch	Joseph Sirola
Elaine Giftos	Abraham Sofaer
Ned Glass	Carol Ann Susi
James Gregory	Mary Wickes
Pat Harrington	Keenan Wynn

Reviewed by
Stuart M. Kaminsky

Stuart M. Kaminsky teaches in the film division of Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois. He is the author of several books including *Don Siegel: Director* (Curtis), *Clint Eastwood (Signet)*, *American Film Genres* (Pflaum) and forthcoming anthologies on Ingmar Bergman (Oxford) and genre theory (Pflaum). In preparation are books devoted to Charlton Heston and American film comedy. Kaminsky, a regular contributor whose analysis of *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD* appears elsewhere in this issue, recently completed work on his first fantasy film which he co-wrote and co-directed with Steve Fagin.

He wears a rumpled light-weight, light-colored suit, often out of season, a distinctive and not particularly attractive straw hat, a tape-recorder over one shoulder and a camera over the other. He is Carl Kolchak (Darren McGavin), the night stalker, at first glance the most unlikely heir to Dr. Van Helsing that one could imagine.

Kolchak, as the character has evolved on the 1974-75 ABC Television series **KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER**, based on two made-for-television features (*THE NIGHT STALKER*, 1972, and *THE NIGHT STRANGLER*, 1973), is very much a man of the media, an apparently paranoid hero, whose paranoia always turns out to be based on reality, though that may be questionable since each tale in the series is told by Kolchak, who may not be totally reliable. Let's examine the character. The pattern of each show, the formula, relates distinctly to the evolution of horror in the media.

Generally, **KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER** opens with a ghastly murder narrated by Kolchak. We find that some initial horror is loose and, by virtue of the voice, we discover that Kolchak has survived that horror and that we are about to see his version of the tale. Invariably, Kolchak is telling his story to a tape-recorder; he is recording his diary for posterity and self, very much like Jonathan Harker, for no one in his world is ready to believe or listen to him. In the episode "The Werewolf," for example, Kolchak tells his tape-recorder of his encounter with a werewolf on board a ship. Behind him a dock porter patiently waits, paying no attention. Kolchak's narration into the machine is cathartic for him, a spewing out of his nightmare from start to finish. Often Kolchak records at his own desk in the office of International News Service where his fellow workers ignore him completely. It is Kolchak's nightmare. The world will not accept it, will not listen, as the world will not listen to the warnings of Dr. Miles Binnell in Don Siegel's *INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS*.

Following the initial crime, the titles for the show come on. One credit is placed over a scene of Kolchak alone at night, at his desk, typing. He hears something. He turns. Freeze frame close-up of Kolchak, frightened, but at his machine. His is a world of paranoia realized.

In contrast to the tape recorder that Kolchak uses to talk to himself and retain his sanity, we have his two other tools, the typewriter and the camera. The evidence of the camera, the pictures of monsters he takes are either destroyed or not believed. The hard evidence of the photo is of no value to Kolchak. His other professional tool, the typewriter, is equally ignored. Thus, word and image are not accepted as evidence.

Invariably, Kolchak gets involved in the horror we have seen initially by being sent out on a story by Tony Vincenzo (Simon Oakland), his editor, a

curious, chastising father figure. Often the story he is sent to get is routine. That is exactly what Tony wants, routine stories, stories which people expect and it is the unexpected which Kolchak finds. The series is set in Chicago, a rather strange Chicago in keeping with the show, but a Chicago noted for its use in the gangster genre, not horror. In fact, several times Kolchak has been involved with gangsters in the series. In "The Zombie," a series of gangland murders were being committed by a zombie. In "The Spanish Moss Murders," Tony tries to get Kolchak to cover a gangland murder, but the genre doesn't interest the reporter. "They're all the same," bleats Kolchak. "Nobody talks. Nobody says anything. Routine." Kolchak's desire is to make the public aware of the horror which lurks in their midst. In psychological terms, it is not unreasonable to say that Kolchak's goal is a kind of public analysis. Let the public know the truth about the horrors it has nurtured, the vampires, werewolves, zombies, swamp monsters. A recurrent motif in the series is Kolchak's discovery that the monster has been created from the human psyche, a monster from the bayou country released by the repressed nightmare of a man undergoing sleep research in "The Spanish Moss Murders," for example. The parallel, perhaps, can be seen with the monster from the Id in *FORBIDDEN PLANET*. In any case, Kolchak becomes a kind of unheeded amateur public psychologist.

Yet, each time he tries to get his story onto the wires of INS, he is stopped, forced away from the public forum which is his profession, to the private diary, the tape recorder. In conjunction with Kolchak's frustration in his profession is that the institutional forces of the city invariably are also hostile to Kolchak's assertions that something beyond their knowledge is responsible for the destruction of human life. Police lieutenants, ship captains, hospital administrators, representatives of established order, shout at him, abuse him, try to keep him and themselves from the truth. Inevitably the police or authority figure is forced to face the truth of the horror he cannot understand. Once the horror has been faced, and defeated, however, the representatives of order refuse to acknowledge that the monster ever existed, refuse to challenge the social view of the order of things and face the terror of their nightmares. The police deny him, his boss refuses to print his story, and he turns to the tape recorder. In fact, it sometimes happens that at the end of an episode Kolchak is jailed for murder, for the police cannot publicly accept that Kolchak has destroyed a monster threatening us all. Instead, he is called mad or a murderer. The forces of law label him a lawbreaker; his boss labels him mad or overworked. "Take a few days off Carl, you've been working too hard," groans Tony, turning to polish up a Kiwanis

speech or finish a meal.

Generally, Kolchak will then seek an outside ally, enlist the aid of someone with special powers: someone representing religion or mysticism rather than a rational view of the world. Invariably, Kolchak will be betrayed or abandoned by the witch doctor, the gypsy, the religious mystic who in the past has been the hope of salvation in so many horror films. Also, invariably, Kolchak will be forced to face the horror alone. Each monster encountered has the potential to destroy the world (or at least Chicago) and Kolchak, the rumpled, wise-cracking, middle-aged reporter, with the non-heroic name must become the hero, must face and destroy the monster. He is not a spiritual figure or a doctor common to the destroyers of horror in the past, but a reporter, a representative of the non-mystical, who possesses no skills or knowledge beyond our own. He is not a superior or inferior being. He is, in many ways, a common man. His only drive is to get the story even if no one wants it, to uncover the truth. Inevitably, he becomes personally involved and must face the monster with tools provided by someone else who will not or cannot face the evil. In "The Energy Eater," an Indian (American) witch doctor played by Roger Smith runs away from a hospital being threatened by an Indian spirit; in "Horror In The Heights," an eighty-year-old Indian (East) played by Abraham Sofaer, is too feeble to destroy the monster.

It is always Kolchak who must step forward with the ancient tools and face the evil directly. Guns are always useless. Kolchak, armed with stake, the sharpened branch of a swamp tree, a cross bow, bullets made of silver, the needle-thread-and-salt to sew up the mouth of a zombie, must stand face to face with the creature. He may run screaming, but he always recovers, turns, and faces the creature, who always appears in the night world of horror, the world of dreams, not the world

Scenes from **KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER**, an ABC-TV television series. Facing Page: Darren McGavin as Carl Kolchak, a wire service reporter who strives to make the public aware of the horror which lurks in their midst. Left: In "Bad Medicine," Kolchak encounters a Diablero (Ted Cassidy), an ancient Indian spirit capable of assuming animal form. Right: In "The Spanish Moss Murders," Kolchak attempts to warn sleep researcher Severn Darden (right) that his subject (Donald Mantooth) has materialized a legendary bayou monster from his subconscious mind as a result of the experiment. His warning goes unheeded by the doctor and policeman Keenan Wynn (left). In fact, Kolchak is never heeded. The world will not accept the story he has to tell. The world very often is not even willing to listen. It is Kolchak's nightmare. His is a world of paranoia realized.



Top: In "The Ripper," Kolchak tries to convince Tony (Simon Oakland), his boss, that the murders of pretty Chicago massage parlor girls are being committed by Jack the Ripper. Middle: Kolchak, hammer and stake in hand, seeks out his adversary in "Vampire." Bottom: In "Mr. R.I.N.G.," Kolchak uncovers a secret military robot (Craig Baxley) run amuck, being protected by its creator (Corrine Michaels).

of daytime violence in police shows.

The Chicago of **KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER** is an appropriate setting for the series, for it is a nether world. It is neither Chicago or an unreal city. We frequently see Kolchak driving down State street past the Chicago Theatre, down the outer drive past the Hancock Building. We see the icons of Chicago which the world can recognize. We have root in a supposedly real world. Yet, when we get into each episode, we have a dreamlike general city. We have a place called Roosevelt Heights which looks like a lower middleclass urban Jewish neighborhood, existing only as a past memory, not a present reality. We have a place, supposedly on the South Side, where Southern fiddlers play on the street for quarters. No such place exists in the real city. Yet, what we have in the series is the surface of reality, the simple things we can recognize, followed by the generalized city attacked by horror.

The monsters which Kolchak encounters are an extension of the American horror monsters we know. They are often more brutal—killing dozens, defiling the bodies—and, more importantly, much less secretive. From the first vampire in Los Angeles to the werewolf on board a ship, the monsters in **KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER** do not need to hide, to lurk. They are in the streets, yet society does not wish to recognize the fact. Only Kolchak, the very old, and the religiously mystical are willing to acknowledge this street-walking horror, and only Kolchak is willing to face it. In fact, it often comes down to Kolchak having to face the monster, for his probing becomes a threat to the creature. His role as reporter, prober, seeker after truth, is a threat to evil, and he becomes the next potential victim. No show passes without Kolchak's life being directly threatened by the monster, by Kolchak taking the viewer's burden and fear on himself. He is no traditional hero. He feels and shows fear, but he accepts his task.

Kolchak's world is an enclosed one. We never see him as a human outside of his job, a man with friends other than contacts and colleagues. He appears to have no interests other than his job. His co-workers, like the police and the socially acceptable, are a hindrance rather than a help, yet they are his only family. His boss, a bumbling father figure, never believes his stories. Ron (Jack Grinnage), his fellow worker, is a complete pragmatist, a smug brother, a young man with facts about everything at his fingertips. Ron is dull. Carl is a man of vision. Ron never leaves the office. Carl is restless in it. The other primary co-worker is Emily (Ruth McDevitt). Ron is the young member, Carl the middle-aged, and Emily the old potential mother. She is constantly championing senior citizens, resenting comments about the enfeebled, the old, the ancient. She is forever asserting her right to life, writing novels, going on dates. Her life affirmation, the very thing Kolchak tries to champion, makes her Kolchak's best friend, a pseudo-supportive mother. In "Horror In The Heights," Kolchak is told that the monster takes on the appearance of the person the victim most trusts. Kolchak announces that he trusts no one. The monster ap-



pears to him as Emily, and Kolchak must fire a crossbow directly at her, which he does, a potentially traumatic Oedipal murder which Kolchak accepts without blinking.

Thus the problem Kolchak faces inside his office is familial, represented by the rational, unfeeling Ron on one hand who is, ironically, young; and the life-affirming Emily on the other, who is old. Between them is the vacillating Tony who must act as judge and who always votes for the status quo. Kolchak is seen as the errant son. On the outside, Kolchak is between two forces also, the officials of society on the one hand who operate in daytime and are, like Ron, rationalists, and the horror creatures of the night, the emotional, physical monsters. Caught between is the populace which is decimated and Kolchak, their hero, who avenges them without reward.

Kolchak himself is a life-affirming creature of great activity. He is constantly in motion, compulsively talking, joking, probing, making himself vulnerable. At the same time, his job makes him an outsider, an intruder, most people in authority do not want to deal with him, yet to save the institution, the society, Kolchak must force himself on them. Kolchak, ultimately, is a man unappreciated by his colleagues, his society and its leaders. Publicly, he is a clown and a nuisance. In press conferences, which are depicted frequently in the series, he asks embarrassing questions, separates himself from his fellow reporters. His public face is seen in the light of day, and he is treated without respect by a series of smug officials played by such character actors as Kenan Wynn, William Daniels, Severn Darden. The ultimate irony of Kolchak is that he is engaged in a public profession yet his satisfactions are never made public.

Finally, the monsters of the series are traditional in that they represent an immortal evil, yet none of them feel the anguish and remorse we have come to expect. The curse of immortality is alluded to in the shows on vampires and werewolves, but we do not see the immortality passed on to the victims. In **KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER**, to die is not to be turned into an immortal creature of evil, it is to be turned into nothing. In this sense, the series does not deal with coming to terms with mortality as American horror films so frequently have in the past. We have no anguished monsters, no creatures crying for release in random rational moments. The horror of **KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER** is the horror of the street, the horror of violence, the horror in a dreamlike urban city. Our hero is not the traditional savior of horror films who can bring us to terms with mortality through religion or knowledge. Our hero is a pragmatist, a reporter, who accepts that horror exists, that it is violent and sudden, and that it is his and, possibly, our responsibility to face it.

The humor of the series is often derived from an understanding that traditionally Kolchak is such a strange savior, perhaps an unworthy man elevated by chance, fear and professional zeal to protect society. He is not unique in this. Reporters as probers, representatives of society, have appeared in many horror films as heroes (**DR. X**, for example), or clowns (**MAD LOVE**). In the past, however, the reporter has fallen back on the police, a religious figure or a scholar to help him defeat evil. In **KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER**, as we have seen, Kolchak is rejected by all, and at the end is a man alone, alone with the monster, alone with his tale, rumbled, frightened, possibly amused, perhaps unreliable, but ever vigilant.

OCFQO

once

ONCE is an extraordinary allegorical and aesthetic film experience, one of the simplest and most unique fantasies ever. It has only three players: Christopher Mitchum as Creation, Marta Kristen as Woman, and Jim Malinda as Destruction. It has no dialog, and only one location, an island. A visual experience, both in intellectual and emotional terms, ONCE proves cinema's limitless capacity to tell a story without a strict literary structure.

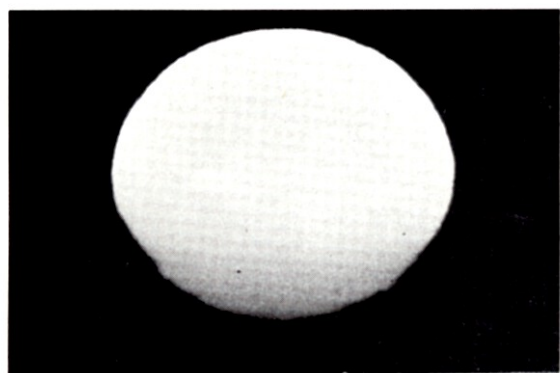
ONCE is the first feature to be directed by filmmaker Morton Heilig who has, up to now, concentrated on the production of short documentary films, mainly for television distribution. His twenty-minute color short DESTINATION MAN, produced for the United States Information Agency, has been screened at the Trieste Science Fiction Film Festival, and he produced two segments, "Survival In Space" and "The Thinking Robot," for the excellent CBS documentary series THE 21ST CENTURY. Like most filmmakers, Heilig has a trunk full of unfiled projects—notes, treatments, sketches and scripts that never got off the ground. It was his wife Marianne who pulled ONCE out of the trunk and got the ball rolling. After twenty-five years in the film business with numerous and successful short films to his credit, Heilig still yearned to do his first feature and conceived of ONCE as something he could realistically afford to make. "From experience," he told me at his home in Pacific Palisades, "I came to the conclusion that it would have to be a film with no interior lighting, no costumes, no sets, no sound and just a handful of people."

Urging from his wife eventually led to investment parties, scouting locations, and finally borrowing enough money to begin the actual production. As luck would have it, they had found the ideal location on the island of Espiritu Santo, Baja California, Mexico, and the \$17,000 they had raised got them there, with generous help from the president of F&B/Ceco of California in the form of deferrer equipment expenses. Everyone, cast and crew, deferred payment to work for a percentage of the picture, and ONCE was born.

"At the time," says Heilig, "I was very much involved in a kind of religious intro-

ONCE. Communication Design. 12/73. 100 minutes. In Color. Produced by Marianne and Morton Heilig. Written, directed, edited and photographed by Morton Heilig. Music by Aminidav Aloni. Cast: Christopher Mitchum, Marta Kristen, Jim Malinda.

Below: Creation greets the rising sun, his only companion. Left: At sunset He stands alone still, but decides to create Mankind in the form of a woman to relieve His solitude. Right: At the end, Mankind dissolves back into the ocean as Creation lies at her side.



spection. One illusion man can't have is to 'affect the universe.' We can turn rivers, dam lakes, and move the landscape around, but it's obvious that our effect on the universe is minimal. If we can't make our mark that way, our major function then is consumption, not material, but more as an act of appreciation. There's a very strong strain of this in the Judaic religion where their posture is one of adoration, of admiring God's works. In some strange way, our primary function then is to give love back to the creative force. From this I began to formulate a love story. There is a creative force and a destructive force who are subordinate to God, like demigods. These I symbolized in terms of the male actors and made 'mankind' in the form of a woman. I was influenced by short films, especially AN OCCURRENCE AT OWL CREEK BRIDGE, which poetically communicates ideas in cinematic terms without the use of words."

While Heilig's film sounds pretentious in the extreme, in viewing, the potentially heavy handed, simple-minded symbolism is magically transformed into warm, appealing, and strangely moving story-telling. Heilig uses his trio of characters to visualize symbolically the struggle between good and evil for the soul and adoration of mankind. His actors have a graceful, almost balletic intensity. Jim Malinda is especially fine as "Destruction," a dark-haired, animalistic force, conveying a demonic intensity with carefully balanced emoting.

ONCE was screened out of competition at the Cannes Film Festival in 1974 where it was greeted with a standing ovation and shouts of "Bravo!" and "This is cinema!" The film received just praise from French reviewers, but has not fared as well in America. Late in 1973 the film received a one-week commercial run in Westwood to qualify for Oscar consideration, but was passed over by the Academy. Screening the same year at the Atlanta Film Festival also failed to create excitement or elicit awards. Like James B. Harris' SOME CALL IT LOVING, ONCE is an artistic American fantasy film vainly in search of an audience in its homeland.

Dale Winogura



2001: FILM POETRY

by Tonda Marton

As poetry is economy and compression, perhaps this is why there are so few feature-length film poems (as opposed to the small patches of film poetry that can be seen in many films). For a film poem to be feature-length, its subject must be truly immense in order that, when the film is finished and stands before you, the bulk of the subject is left unsaid and the only thing that remains is the distilled poetic image. Short films can better sustain poetry on the screen, and there are several examples of such shorts: *NEW YORK*, *DREAM OF THE WILD HORSES* and *AN OCCURRENCE AT OWL CREEK BRIDGE*. Here we experience personal intense visions of a city, a dream, and a dying man's fantasy. They are all very lean, with the fat, the nonessential, cut away. Their subjects are also the perfect size for their lengths, and their lengths, conversely, are just the right size to contain their subjects. If they were longer, they would begin to lose that element of economy, and thereby their poetry. The subjects are few that lend themselves gracefully to film poetry on the gigantic scale of the feature-length film. Such a subject, however, and such a film is *2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY*.

2001 is a poem: one with perhaps less poetry in some parts than in others, but a large, dramatic, epic poem none the less. It also exists as film, and therefore uses the language of film—sight, sound, movement, rhythm, form, composition—to express its poetry, and each plays a distinct part in the total poetic result. The film has been carefully worked upon. The scenes have been selected and cut, and the end product polished and refined to a high degree to give it the poetry that it has. Although *2001* is a highly visual film, sensuously, almost seductively so, it is necessary to stress that the film's auditory qualities play an essential role in the creation of its poetry. Before there is an image on the screen, there is a low basso hum, an eerie presage that leads into the opening of the film with the music of Richard Strauss's "Thus Sprach Zarathustra." *2001* employs a use of both sound effects and music that is not only highly creative but also basic to the poetry of the film.

M. Arnold, in Maurice de Guerin said of poetry: "The grand power of poetry is its interpretive power, by which I mean...the power of so dealing with things as to awaken in us a wonderfully full, new and intimate sense of them and of our relations with them." This is precisely what Stanley Kubrick

accomplishes when he places Strauss's "Blue Danube" waltz behind the image of a slowly turning, immense space station, or a slowly orbiting space shuttle. It provides us with a "new and intimate sense" of not only the image but also of the music, by juxtaposing such seemingly unrelated ideas. In suggesting that the Newtonian, orbital movement of celestial bodies around each other is like a giant, monumental, slow-motion waltz, Kubrick creates a sort of audio-visual pun that becomes one of the most striking metaphors of the entire film. His choice of the Khat-chaturian "Gayane Ballet Suite" that opens the Jupiter mission segment of the film is also brilliant. It creates a mood of sombre melancholy and reflects what might be called the loneliness of the long-distance astronaut.

Other use of sound throughout the film is also interesting. While the film starts with sound before image, and while sound and music are as important as they are, the first half of the film ends with the loudest silence I have ever heard: the mute, immense closeup of the two astronauts' mouths, their conversation being malevolently observed by an estranged, all-powerful computer. There is the almost abstract use of the labored breathing of Poole outside the spaceship as he works on the telemetry antenna. This creates not only a sense of claustrophobia in the viewer (a paradoxical effect, considering the endless space that confronts the eye at the same time) but also an illusion, at times, that it is the massive spaceship itself that is breathing in the stillness of the universe. This use of breathing underscores the last sequence of the film, where it becomes an almost mythical pulse underlying the transubstantiation at the end of the film.

One of the powers of the poetry of the film lies in its images, individually powerful but also important and intrinsic to the basic themes of the film. In the beginning we see a dawning sun, parallel with the beginnings of man. We see it head on, primitively, openly, with awe. There is a certain audacity in looking squarely, head on at the sun, a bravura that is to prove a propelling force for man—it is the same audacity that makes him move out to the stars. The sun we see in the latter part of the film is refracted, deflected by sophisticated structures spinning in space, no longer the single, unified, coherent image we encounter in the film's opening. Another impressive image is that of the slowly rotating space station. Although Kubrick had little choice in

the actual shape of the structure, it is none the less interesting to think of the importance of the wheel in the development of human culture and technology. The design of the spaceship used in the Jupiter mission resembles the skeletal structure of the earliest life forms that crawled onto land to evolve into something greater, and this resemblance is intensified by the presence of HAL in the front of the ship like a giant brain (with a nervous system running down the spinal column of the delicate structure), animating this fragile animal that is to take man out of the waters, as it were, and on to some even greater form of being.

Samuel Johnson felt that the essence of poetry was invention: "...such invention as, by producing something unexpected, surprises and delights." Kubrick's *2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY* certainly qualifies under this criteria—when the Pan American jet rounds the earth and we recognize a waltz, when the stewardess slowly and deliberately walks up the curved wall and exits, upside down, from another door, when the spaceship lands on the moon in a honeycomb-like structure that turns out to have clearly defined human activity on every level, we are more than surprised and delighted. Our minds are tickled, and a whole new concept becomes familiar to us; it is as if reality were a changing cube, and as Kubrick's poetry bumps it over, we keep discovering something new on each face. A precision in scientific thought is never the object of this game. As F. W. Robertson said, "The office of poetry is not to make us think accurately, but feel truly," and that's where Kubrick excels, by touching each of us emotionally. His poetry lies in the beautiful colors and designs, the lights and shadows which play incessantly in an hypnotic choreography of movement, in the surreal juxtaposition of the familiar and unfamiliar. But his poetry lies also beyond these things. Indeed, if his creativity and ideas ended with images on the screen, if all were explicitly laid before us, there would be no poetry. Kubrick distills the feeling of promise and of bending to that promise that lies within the grasp of man, and glimpses for us the fabric of a possible future. And if, perhaps, in the end not everything is completely clear, that too is a part of Kubrick's poetry, for poetry is, ultimately, mystery. That a poem should have economy, compression, interpretation, invention, and truth is the magic conjured by the poet, and mystery is an element of his craft.

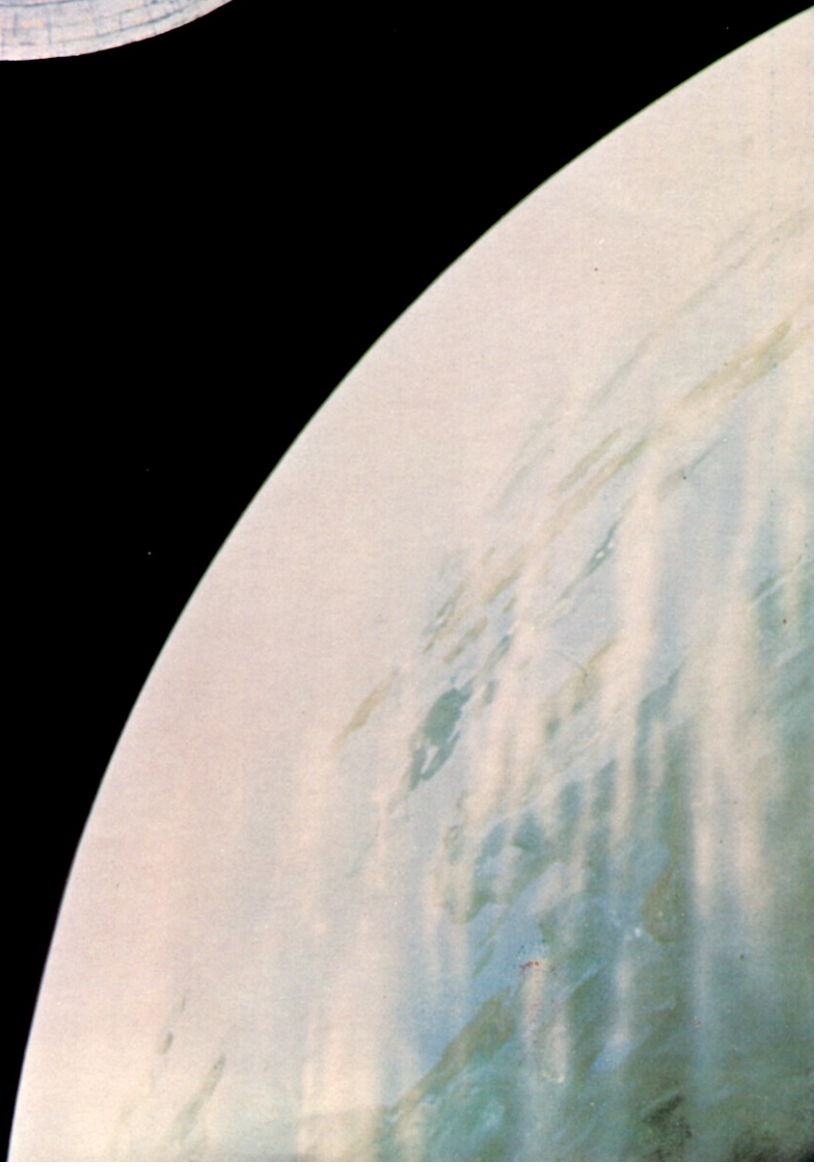
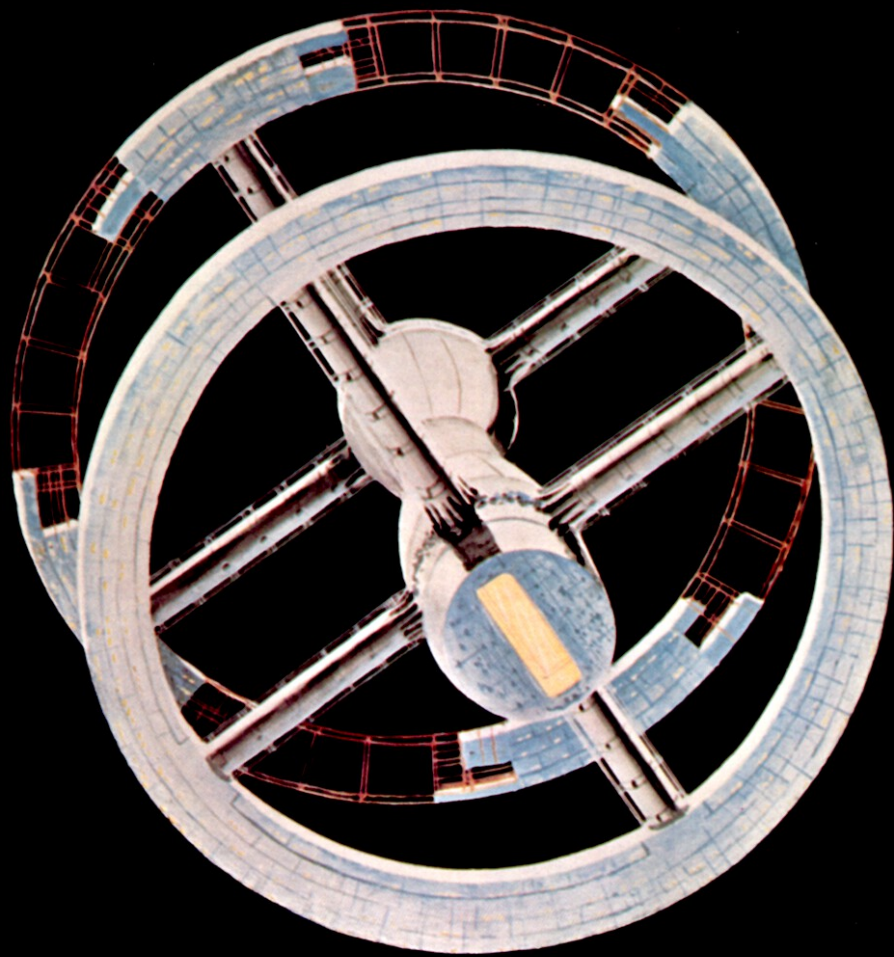
2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY A United Artists Reissue. 8/74. Originally released 4/68. 148 minutes. "In Metrocolor and Super Panavision. Presented by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Directed and produced by Stanley Kubrick. Screenplay by Stanley Kubrick and Arthur C. Clarke. Director of photography, Geoffrey Unsworth. Additional photography, John Alcott. Production design, Tony Masters, Harry Lange, Ernie Archer. Edited by Ray Lovejoy. Special photographic effects designed and directed by Stanley Kubrick. Special effects supervisors, Wally Veevers, Douglas Trumbull, Con Pederson, Tom Howard. Special photographic effects unit, Colin J. Cantwell, Bruce Logan, Bryan Loftus, David Osborne, Frederick Martin, John Jack Malick. Wardrobe, Hardy Amies. Music by Aram Khachaturian (Gayane Ballet Suite), Gyorgy Ligeti (Atmospheres, Lux Aeterna, Requiem), Johann Strauss (The Blue Danube), and Richard Strauss (Thus Spake Zarathustra). First assistant director, Derek Cracknell. Camera operator, Kelvin Pike. Art director, John Hoesli. Make up, Stuart Freeborn. Sound supervisor, A. W. Watkins. Sound editor, Winston Ryder. Editorial assistant, David de Wilde. Sound mixer, H. L. Bird. Chief dubbing mixer, J. B. Smith. Scientific consultant, Frederick I. Ordway III. Made at MGM British Studios, Boreham Wood, England.

Bowman Keir Dullea
Poole Gary Lockwood
Dr. Heywood Floyd, William Sylvester
Moonwatcher Dan Richter
Hal 9000 Douglas Rain
Smyslov Leonard Rossiter
Elena Margaret Tyzack
Halvorsen Robert Beatty
Michaels Sean Sullivan
Mission Controller Frank Miller

Tonda Marton lives in Los Angeles, and her interests are film and theater. She was a production assistant on the feature film *SCHLOCK*, and just completed the stage production of John Costigan's "Baby Want a Kiss" which she produced and directed.

Morris Scott Dollens is a Los Angeles illustrator well known for his work in the field of astronomical art. At right he captures the poetry inherent in Kubrick's ballet mechanic.







COMING

THE DEVIL'S RAIN began filming January 27 on location in Durango, Mexico for release by Bryanston Pictures. The occult suspense-thriller is being directed by Robert Fuest, the stylish British director of the Vincent Price Dr. Phibes films, and stars Eddie Albert, Ida Lupino, Ernest Borgnine, Keenan Wynn and William Shatner. The picture received some notoriety when Mercedes MacCambridge, the voice of Regan in **THE EXORCIST**, first agreed to appear in the picture and then refused after reading the script, saying that to do so would be against her religious convictions! (?) The film is being produced by Sanford Howard who did that science fiction dud known as **THE NEPTUNE FACTOR** (1973). Bryanston, the distributor, has made a name for itself with three highly successful horror film releases in 1974, **ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN**, **BLOOD FOR DRACULA** and **THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE**...

IN SEARCH OF DRACULA has been picked up for US release by Sam Sherman of Independent-International Pictures, a distributor of cheap horror exploitation pictures. The film was made in 1971 by director Calvin Floyd for Sweden's Aspekt Films and is a documentary featuring horror film actor Christopher Lee (2:4:46) ...

LOGAN'S RUN is scheduled to begin filming this Spring for release by MGM through United Artists. Michael Anderson, who recently completed **DOC SAVAGE: THE MAN OF BRONZE** for George Pal, has been signed to direct from a screenplay by David M. Goodman. Anderson was slated to direct the film while it was in preparation for filming by George Pal in the late sixties. The MGM management changed so frequently during this period that Pal never was able to begin actual production. The film is based on the science fiction novel by William F. Nolan and George Clayton Johnson telling of one individual's determination to live beyond the legal age-limit in a future society. Saul David is producing (3:2:38)...

MAGNA 1--BEYOND THE BARRIER REEF is being scripted by Gene Roddenberry from an original story by Jack DeWitt for producer Sanford Howard. The film will be an epic ad-

Top: Christopher Lee and Joanna Lumley in **THE SATANIC RITES OF DRACULA**, Hammer Films' last of the series produced two years ago. Warner Bros controls distribution in this country but has no plans to release the film unless an opportune hole in their distribution schedule opens up, which means the film may be dumped without publicity at any moment. Middle: Chris Lee as an outer space alien from the ITV television series **SPACE 1999**, now in syndication in this country. The British series is produced by Gerry and Sylvia Anderson (UFO, **JOURNEY TO THE FAR SIDE OF THE SUN**) and is being touted as "the most expensive hour show ever produced for television." Bottom: A scene from **THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW**, now filming in England for release by 20th Century-Fox. Little Nell and Patricia Quinn unbandage Peter Hinwood, with Tim Curry standing in the water tank. The film is a mad rock musical.

venture involving an underwater city in the year 2075. Roddenberry was the creator and executive producer of the highly successful **STAR TREK** television series, but has been unsuccessful in selling numerous genre pilot films to the networks for a new series. The film will be released by 20th Century-Fox (3:3:46)...

MARIANNE is a production of New Orleans based Cinema Systems dealing with Voodoo queen Marie Laveau. The film is directed by Noel Black, director of **PRETTY POISON**, and stars Kitty Winn, who played Ellen Burstyn's personal secretary in **THE EXORCIST**. The story examines the nature of illusion and reality. Marie Laveau in myth and form appears within the context of the story, and it is through her that the mechanisms of madness and obsession are triggered. Stirling W. Smith is the president and executive producer of Cinema Systems, a new production distribution company dedicated to bringing quality fantasy films to the public. The company is currently releasing the Christopher Lee produced **NOTHING BUT THE NIGHT** in this country and is considering the acquisition and release of the Russian science fiction epic **SOLARIS** as well as the exquisite Jacques Demy fantasy **PEAU D'ANE** (Donkey Skin). Says Smith: "Fantasy films have had a difficult time in the marketplace in America due in large part to the misunderstanding of distributors as to exactly how to merchandise this particular genre. Ironically, in the public arena, it is far easier to draw a crowd to view overt violence than it is to find a small selective audience interested in the poetry and mystery present within all of cinema." Cinema Systems should become a new force in America for the production and distribution of quality fantasy films...

THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW is a homage to all the classic science fiction and horror movies of the past four decades. Based on the highly successful rock musical by Richard O'Brien and Jim Sharman, the film stars Tim Curry as the crazy, transvestite scientist Dr. Frank N. Furter. Produced by Michael White, the film is currently underway at England's Bray Studios for release by 20th Century-Fox in August, also starring Little Nell, Patricia Quinn, and Charles Gray (Mocata in Hammer's **THE DEVIL'S BRIDE**). Jim Sharman, director of the original stage musical, is directing...

THE SECOND COMING OF SUZANNE is a film written and directed by Michael Barry, son of actor Gene Barry, based on the premise that Jesus was a woman. Film depicts a modern day second-coming, and has been passed over for distribution by all the majors, despite a handsome reception at the Atlanta Film Festival and several others. Barry is now attempting to self-distribute the film in four-wall situations. Sondra Locke plays the Christ figure with Paul Sand, Richard Dreyfus, and Gene Barry starring...

SIDNEY AND THE WEREWOLF'S WIDOW is the title of a play by Bill Manhoff acquired for filming by Universal as a possible vehicle for star Walter Matthau. Harry Keller will produce the film now being scripted by Julius J. Epstein...

THE SPIRAL STAIRCASE is being remade by director Peter Collinson at England's Bray studios starring Sam Wanamaker, Mildred Dunnock, Gayle Hunnicutt and John Philip Law. The Ethel Lina White novel was originally filmed by Robert Siodmak for RKO in 1946. Release by Warner Bros...

LETTERS

I saw *THE EXORCIST* over a year ago about five days after it opened and thought it a largely successful horror film, one that raised the genre a notch in the psyche of the general public. After reading what many film critics have said about the film I now begin to have doubts.

Your fourteen page coverage in 3-4 struck me very heavily as being overkill. There is only so much one would like to know about something before it becomes a dreadful bore. In 3-3 you ran an eight page interview with Friedkin so another couple of pages seems unnecessary. About the only value I can see in your report (besides being "definitive") is the interview with Dick Smith. Valuable because it revealed so many of the techniques he used to achieve his outstanding makeup and special effects work with Vercoeur. The gimmicks were necessary to create the effects and are the film's chief virtue.

David Bartholomew mentions the poor showing it did in New York City after its initial bombast upon the public. No doubt this was caused by saturation booking. The same thing has happened in Toronto as well. While other films released about the same time get bookings, *THE EXORCIST* has rarely been found. Recently a downtown "art house" showed it for a week in November but prior to that its last bookings were months before at suburban theatres and drive-ins. Theatres that had lobby displays notifying potential customers in advance that the film was coming mysteriously never did show the film. It certainly appears that *THE EXORCIST* fever has come to an end or certainly died down. Today I wonder what all the fuss was about.

GARY KIMBER
139 Highview Ave. Scarborough Canada

I was rather amused to read Reynold Humphries comments re *THE EXORCIST* in the Letters section of 3-4. He obviously cares little for the American government's actions in world politics. I won't try to show him the naivete of the remarks he made, as they are his opinions and he is entitled to them. As obvious is his disapproval of *THE EXORCIST*, and that too is his opinion. However, to compare the two as he attempts to do is an exercise in absurdity. The fact that he submits a loosely disguised political statement to a magazine devoted to science fiction, fantasy and horror films causes one to think that Humphries is as "caught up in the crass ideological presuppositions" of his class and society as he accuses both Friedkin and Blatty to be. No matter. Here, politics is not subject of discussion, film criticism is.

His attack on *THE EXORCIST* is unsubstantiated generalizations, with one exception he chooses to elaborate. He says he finds it impossible "for any half-intelligent person" to accept the film's portrayal of the symptoms of evil: specifically the use of obscenities

and the physical manifestations of Reagan. These symptoms were present in the 1949 "haunted" boy of Washington, a case in which a 14-year-old youth was believed to have been possessed, and upon whom a formal rite of exorcism was performed to cast out the devils. It was this event which, when researched by Blatty, led him to write a closely based novelization in *The Exorcist*, later filmed by Friedkin. It should be noted that these two symptoms in themselves are not the only indications of evil in the film, as Humphries implies. Thus, his only detailed criticism of the film turns out to be totally unfounded.

ARTHUR ASPROMATIS
45 Shoreham Dr E. Dix Hills NY 11746

In his review of *THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD* (3-2), Dan Scapperotti finds that one fault of the film is that only one of Sinbad's men dies; this is not so. As a matter of fact, four of his men perish during the course of the story—one is strangled and tossed overboard by the statue of the Siren; two are killed in the battle with the six-armed statue of Kali; and one, fat and bald Omar, is done in by the butt end of a spear by the Centaur. Considering that there are only about eight or ten men in Sinbad's crew, I would say that is enough slaughter for anyone. I do admit that most of the deaths seem to be lost in surrounding events.

Scapperotti states that the characterizations in the film are not very "in depth." I agree with him. I do believe, however, that he ignores the basic fantasy aspect of the film and more directly the theme of the film, Destiny, with a strong emphasis on the battle between the forces of Good and Evil. The characters are, after all, merely tools of fate as good and evil play their cards, though, as the Oracle states in the film: "It is the deeds of weak and mortal men that may tip the scales one way or the other."

Scapperotti also objects to the fairy tale quality of the story. An opinion I might agree with if the film had set out to chronicle the actions of real people or historical events. Since the story is a fairy tale, I do not believe it can be criticized on that basis anymore than any other film may be criticized for identifying itself.

RUSSELL CARDENAL
441 Second Ave. Harvey LA 70058

I had the pleasure of interviewing King Donovan, who was appearing here in "The Prisoner of Second Avenue" with his wife, Imogene Coca. I showed him 2-3, which pictured him in an article on *INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS*. Donovan had some interesting asides regarding the picture. He told me it was "too bad it couldn't have been made as it should have been." He said it came from "a very fine novel" and two aspects of the book were different in the film. According to Donovan, the part of the psychiatrist (played by Larry Gates) was "negated in the film." He also brought out the point that Siegel did in your interview that the plot was played very lightly in some aspects with what Donovan called "a simple and homey approach." The producers, however, felt any lightness would ruin the climax when it came and it would not be accepted by the public. Donovan called this attitude a "total falacy" and a good example of how "creative persons can be put down

by money" or producers. Donovan said the film was "a lot of fun to be a part of" and he thinks it is regarded today as "a minor classic." He said Kevin McCarthy, Dana Wynter, Carolyn Jones and himself worked about ten days on the sets before shooting began and the film had a twelve day shooting schedule, and due to rehearsals there were few retakes. Regarding Sam Peckinpah, he said he was an assistant to Siegel who got a bit in the picture to make a little more money. He also said he doesn't think Siegel is affected by all the critical acclaim which has come to him of late. He said Siegel just wants to work and be left alone to work, although he probably appreciates the increase in freedom he has, which has been brought about by all the acclaim.

Donovan also worked in tv and in *THE DEFIANT ONES* with Lon Chaney. He called Chaney a "pretty quiet guy" and said he really liked him. He said even then Chaney was not in very good health. Of his other science fiction films, Donovan seemed to like *THE MAGNETIC MONSTER*, which he said was made as a possible tv property and he said he had little to do in *THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS*. No mention was made of *RIDERS TO THE STARS* other than that it was one of several films he did for Ivan Tors.

MIKE PITTS
910 W 6th St #3, Anderson IN 46016

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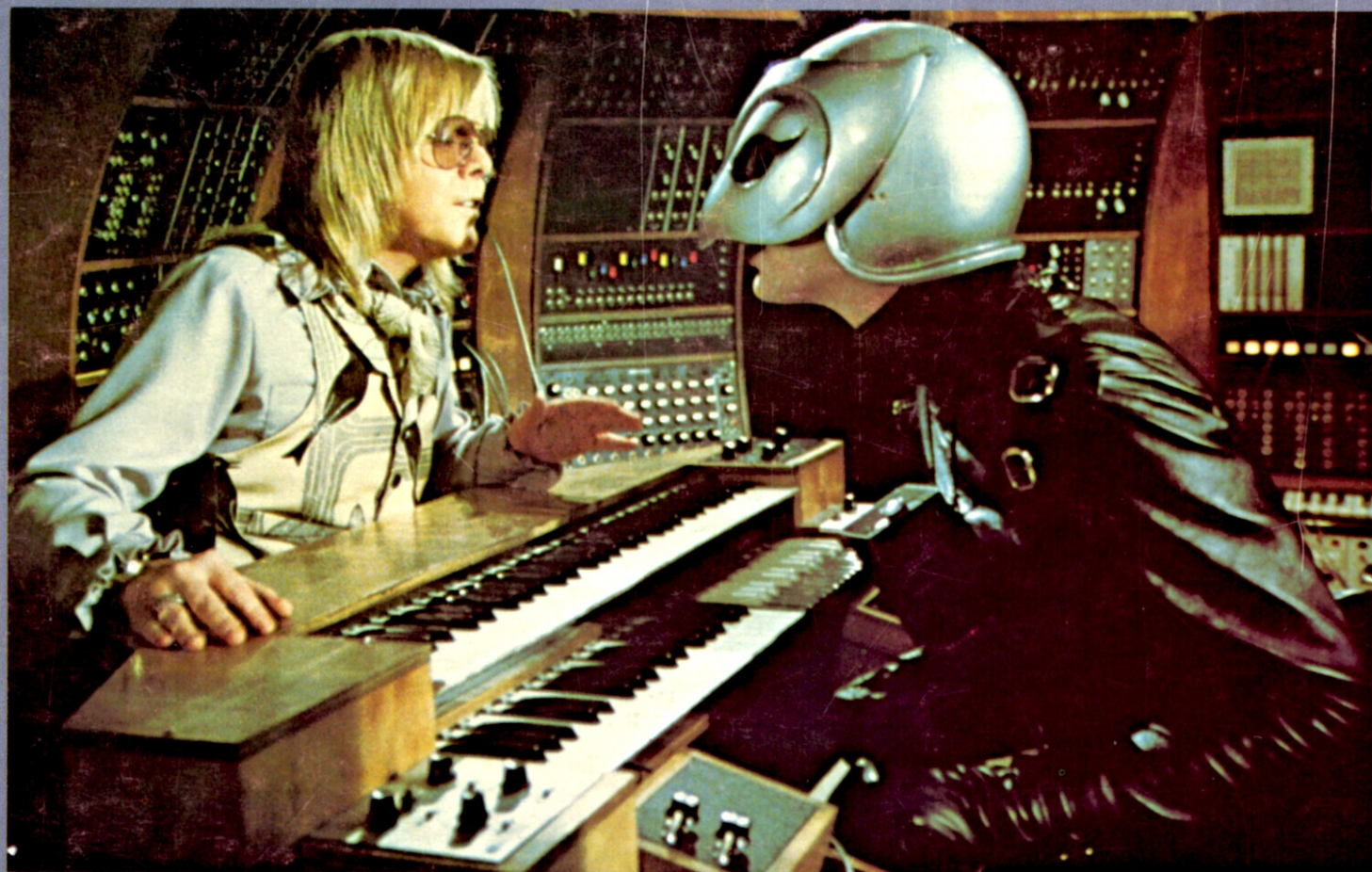
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